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MAGAZINE 2018/2019

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2018/19

Featuring:

**Message from
the Prime Minister**

**An Historic Visit: HRH
The Duke of Cambridge
in Israel**

**Beyond Brexit:
Championing
UK-Israel Trade**

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CONTENTS

- 02 Introducing CFI
- 03 Welcome
- 04 A Message from **Prime Minister Theresa May**
- 05 A Message from **His Excellency Mark Regev, Israeli Ambassador to the United Kingdom**
- 06 A Message from **His Excellency David Quarrey, British Ambassador to Israel**
- 08 CFI and Israel According To...
- 10 An Historic Visit: HRH The Duke of Cambridge in Israel
- 12 In Conversation with CFI Parliamentary Chairmen **Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP and Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles**
- 14 We Stand Shoulder to Shoulder with the Jewish Community **Rt. Hon. James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government**
- 16 CFI Delegations to Israel **Baroness Jenkin of Kennington, Steve Double MP**
- 20 Beyond Brexit: Championing UK-Israel Trade **Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP**
- 22 Britain and Israel: The Ecosystem of Collaboration **Sam Gyimah MP, Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation**
- 24 Israel at 70: A Timeline of Achievements
- 26 Israel's Eurovision Win is a Triumph Against BDS **Paul Masterton MP**
- 28 Iran's Regional Aggression Has Brought Together Unlikely Allies **Rt. Hon. Theresa Villiers MP**
- 31 The 'Bomb Shelter Capital of the World' **Lord Shinkwin**
- 32 Tackling Hate on University Campuses **Hen Mazzig**
- 34 Israel's Global Humanitarian Aid
- 36 Technology Saving Lives **Magen David Adom**
- 38 CFI's Calendar 2017/18
- 40 Spotlight on Coexistence



INTRODUCING

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SUPPORTING ISRAEL AND PROMOTING CONSERVATISM

WELCOME

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to this exciting new edition of CFI's annual Informed magazine.

The last year has been full of momentous occasions.

CFI were delighted to be able to join celebrations for Israel's 70th birthday, coordinating a special lunch in Parliament for 50 Conservative parliamentarians with H.E. Mark Regev, Ambassador of Israel, replete with Israel cupcakes!

One hundred Conservative parliamentarians put their names to a CFI letter published by the Daily Telegraph marking the centenary of the Balfour Declaration and celebrating Israel's achievements since its founding.

The strength and warmth of the UK-Israel relationship was further reaffirmed in June 2018 when HRH The Duke of Cambridge, Prince William made his landmark visit to Israel – the first ever official visit by a member of the Royal family. From playing beach volleyball in Tel Aviv to testing Israel's latest high-tech inventions, the visit gave us many memorable images and it was a delight to hear The Duke reflect on the country's "essential vibrancy".

It has been another action-packed year in Westminster. One of the stand-out moments for CFI was a special trade-themed delegation to Israel in May 2018. Led by former Chief Whip Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP, the delegation of eight Conservative parliamentarians explored post-Brexit trade opportunities and we look forward to shortly sharing with you their report on the importance of UK-Israel trade.

In June, CFI celebrated the ennoblement of Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles after a remarkable four decades of public service. We were delighted to announce him as CFI's first-ever Parliamentary Chairman in the House of Lords, who will work closely alongside Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP, our Parliamentary Chairman in the House of Commons. With six decades of political experience between them, Eric and Stephen are among the most experienced parliamentarians, and their long-standing support for the Jewish State speaks for itself. It has given CFI an exciting platform upon which to expand our work to ensure Israel's case is fairly heard in both Houses.

At all levels, the Conservative Party has demonstrated unwavering support for Israel and the Jewish community; from Prime Minister Theresa May hosting Prime Minister



Lord Polak CBE
CFI Honorary
President



Andrew Heller
CFI Chairman



James Gurd
CFI Executive
Director

Benjamin Netanyahu in London to celebrate the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, through to high-level ministerial visits to Israel, as well as robust and outspoken condemnation of antisemitism and critical financial support to ensure the safety of the Jewish community.

In December 2017, CFI held its Annual Business Lunch with keynote speaker Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, attended by 700 guests, including 170 Conservative parliamentarians and nine cabinet members. The Environment Secretary described it as "one of the biggest events in the political calendar for any parliamentarian" and commended CFI for being in "rude health".

CFI has continued to engage with the myriad of organisations within the Conservative umbrella, including a packed event in Parliament with the Conservative Friends of the Commonwealth. CFI was also delighted to attend the Welsh Conservatives Conference in Llanelli and hear first-hand the strength of support for Israel, and we look forward to attending the next Scottish Conservatives Conference.

The party defied expectations with a strong showing in Local Elections, retaining a number of closely contested councils and achieving some notable successes. In Barnet, a Conservative councillor was elected with a majority of just one in the area the CFI team and our excellent supporters had been campaigning on Election Day! Thank you for your continued support - it clearly makes a huge difference.

We would like to thank our small and dedicated Professional Team for their fantastic work, along with all of our parliamentary supporters.

If you would like further information about any of CFI's activities please visit our website (www.cfoi.co.uk) and follow us on our popular social media pages - Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube - for the latest news.

Enjoy this latest edition of Informed and we hope we can count on your continued support for the year ahead.



This has been a special year for all of us who count ourselves as friends of Israel. The 70th anniversary of the creation of the State of Israel has been marked around the world, and it has had a particular meaning for us here in the UK, where we are proud of our role in helping to create a homeland for the Jewish people – not least through the Balfour Declaration, the centenary of which we celebrated last year.

Seventy years on from the establishment of the State of Israel, the Israeli people can be extremely proud of all that their country has achieved. Today, Israel is a thriving democracy and a global leader in areas such as scientific research, medicine and education. The UK is proud to stand side by side with Israel as an ally with mutual interests, and a close friend with shared values – and I am pleased that the relationship between the UK and Israel continues to go from strength to strength. Nothing demonstrated that better than the historic visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge earlier this year, in what was the first ever official Royal visit to Israel. The warm welcome he received from the people of Israel spoke for itself.

Business and trade between our two countries are at record levels, and we enjoy close links in education, science, culture and the arts. As the UK looks to embrace the opportunities that will exist after Brexit, I want to strengthen our trading relationship with old friends like Israel even further. That's why I am so pleased that this year CFI conducted its first ever trade delegation to Israel, so that Conservative parliamentarians could explore for themselves the opportunities that exist for us to deepen our trading links with the 'Start-Up Nation'.

But the success of Israel's first 70 years has not come easy; in fact, it has been hard-fought. Israel has thrived in the face of the constant threat of violence from its neighbours, the menace of terrorist attacks against its citizens, and the opposition of those who deny even its right to exist. As Prime Minister, I will always support Israel's right to defend itself, and the Government will continue to work towards a two-state solution with a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state. At the same time, the UK is in full agreement with Israel about the vital need to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, and we are committed to working with the international community to ensure that Iran abides by its obligations.

The State of Israel was created in the aftermath of the worst atrocity in human history. The Holocaust showed the world where the evil of antisemitism could lead if left unchallenged. Today we must relearn that lesson. We have all watched with horror as antisemitism and racism have gained a foothold in a major British political party in a way that some of us never thought possible. As Conservatives, we must stand united with the Jewish community and be clear that antisemitism has no place in our society and we will never tolerate it. Jewish people living in the UK should feel safe and secure and not have to worry about leaving their own country.

That is why I was the first world leader to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism; it is why the Government is providing funding to ensure the security of Jewish faith schools, synagogues and communal buildings; and it is why the UK's new Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre will stand next to the Houses of Parliament in the heart of our nation's capital city as a permanent reminder that the horrors of the past must never be repeated.

So as we reflect on this landmark year for Israel, I am proud of the close relationship between our two countries – and I am grateful for everything that Conservative Friends of Israel are doing to promote that friendship. Thank you for your steadfast support for the Conservative Party, and best wishes for the year ahead.

The Ambassador's Office
Embassy of Israel
London



לשכת השגריר
שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

Message from HE Mark Regev, Ambassador of Israel to the Court of St James's

70 years on from Israel's rebirth, I am delighted to report to Conservative Friends of Israel (CFI) that the Israel-UK partnership is stronger than ever. Whether it is the record £6.9bn in bilateral trade we enjoyed in 2017, the over 300 Israeli tech firms now present in Britain, or the first ever official visit to the Jewish state by a senior British Royal in June, there is indeed much we can all celebrate as Israel enters its eighth decade.

The Jewish state is of course sharing its platinum year with Britain's National Health Service, and today, over 350 Israeli medicines are taken every second by patients in the UK. Many of these Israeli pharmaceuticals are the cost-effective 'generic' medicines that together save UK taxpayers £13bn annually, and through the renewal of our BIRAX regenerative medical research programme, Israeli and British researchers are working together to develop new breakthrough cures for the future.

Our ongoing defence and counterterrorism work continues to make our countries, and the world, safer. One such example was in July, when we helped to extract from Syria 'White Helmets' volunteers – whose work has saved lives – as part of a joint humanitarian effort involving our international partners, including the UK's new Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt. This demonstrated clearly the tangible benefits of the cooperation between our two democracies.

As we celebrate these achievements, we should also be cognisant of the challenges Israel faces. In April, my Prime Minister exposed a cache of 100,000 secret Iranian files, revealing the scale of the regime's atomic programme and rendering the nuclear deal untenable. It remains my hope that the United Kingdom will join the United States and Israel in increasing the pressure on the Ayatollahs in Tehran until the Iranian regime ceases its aggressive and destabilising behaviour.

Regrettably, the economic benefits of the Iranian nuclear deal enabled the regime to increase its support for its terror surrogates in the Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza. In recent months, with Iran's material backing, Hamas has waged a vicious campaign, torching Israeli fields, rocketing Israeli communities, and attempting to storm our border. The terrorists continue to propagandise Israel's efforts to defend innocent civilians from harm, in an attempt to justify their militant Islamist agenda.

From Balfour to Churchill, to Thatcher, Cameron and May, eminent Conservatives have proudly championed Israel's cause for more than a century, standing up for the values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law that our peoples share. CFI's work continues in that spirit, and as we mark Israel's 70th year, please know that my country is grateful to you all – not least Lord Polak, the newly ennobled Lord Pickles, Stephen Crabb MP, James Gurd and the entire CFI team – for what you are doing to further strengthen our historic bond.

Mark Regev

2 Palace Green, London, W8 4QB



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06 August 2018

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Dear Friends,

The past year saw a historic moment in relations between the UK and Israel.

In June, His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge came to Israel on the first official visit by a senior member of the Royal Family. Prince William met many Israelis from all walks of life – including political leaders, entrepreneurs, scientists, social activists and artists – and got a taste of life in this country. He also paid his respects to the memory of those who perished in the Holocaust, and heard from survivors who had come to safety in the UK on the Kindertransport. It was a particularly special moment when he met members of the family saved in Greece by his great-grandmother, Princess Alice.

The reaction to the visit was incredibly positive in Israel. I have never worked on a visit quite like it. It was a privilege to do so.

I described Prince William's visit as a celebration of the contemporary relationship between the UK and Israel. That partnership continues to go from strength to strength. Our bilateral trade is growing steadily, building on what were already record levels. There is more Israeli investment coming in to the UK, and more Israeli companies setting up or expanding there.

Earlier this year, the UK Israel Tech Hub, operating in our Embassy in Tel Aviv, launched two healthcare initiatives which will streamline the best of Israeli innovation into the NHS. The result will be better care for patients across the UK. The BIRAX programme, which brings leading British and Israeli researchers together to work on the biggest challenges facing our societies, has been relaunched and will now focus on ageing.

While our business and innovation ties flourish, we also face many shared defence and security challenges. I am proud that the cooperation between our two countries, especially in the fight against terrorism and extremism, is deeper than it has ever been.

It remains a high priority for the British Government to continue working toward a durable peace between Israel and all its neighbours, built upon the two-state solution.

It has been good to see so many CFI members, as well as other British Parliamentarians, in Israel over the last year. These visits are part of the fabric of the UK/Israel relationship. I hope to see many more of you in the coming year.

Yours sincerely,

David Quarrey
HM Ambassador to Israel



'Ah! Jones, organise another layer of bureaucracy, please.'

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CFI AND ISRAEL ACCORDING TO...



Prime Minister Theresa May at CFI Annual Business Lunch 2016

RT. HON. THERESA MAY MP PRIME MINISTER

"The last year has also seen us mark the centenary of the Balfour Declaration. I will never forget standing with Prime Minister Netanyahu to view the original version of that historic letter. It was a very special moment and it encapsulates for me how I feel about Israel. For I am not just proud to support Israel; I am proud of our role in the creation of Israel. And I want to build the strongest and deepest possible relationship between our two countries".
UJIA Annual Dinner, September 2018

"Under my leadership the UK will always be a real and trusted partner for Israel, supporting Israel's security and prosperity, not just through our words but also through our actions".
UJIA Annual Dinner, September 2018

"As the United Kingdom forges a bold new future outside the European Union, we will be seeking free trade deals with our partners around the world. And as a great start-up nation, an engine of enterprise, a world leader in technology, and a great friend of Britain, I want to see an ambitious free trade deal between our countries".
UJIA Annual Dinner, September 2018



Home Secretary Sajid Javid at CFI Annual Business Lunch 2015

RT. HON. SAJID JAVID MP HOME SECRETARY

"I guess necessity is the mother of invention. Because over the past 69 years, Israel really made business bloom in the barren desert. It is the ultimate start-up nation".
Israel's Independence Day (Yom Ha'atzmaut) speech, May 2017

"The lessons I learnt in Israel – as a traveller, businessman and politician – have profoundly shaped the way I have approached my job in Government. I admire Israel for its tenacious determination when the odds are stacked against it. But as a British Government Minister I believe we should not allow the odds to be stacked against Israel. That's why as Secretary of State for Culture, I made it a priority to battle against cultural boycotts of Israel".
Israel's Independence Day (Yom Ha'atzmaut) speech, May 2017



Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson at CFI Parliamentary Reception 2018

RT. HON. GAVIN WILLIAMSON MP DEFENCE SECRETARY

"If we are not there to stand up for a country, whose views and ideals are so close, or are simply our own, what are we as a nation? What are we in politics, if we cannot accept and celebrate the wonderful blooming of democracy that is Israel?"
CFI Parliamentary Reception, January 2018

"Britain and Israel have an amazing relationship. We would like to think that we were very much at the birth of the nation, and very much helped it in terms of its delivery and coming into the world... It's a relationship of partners. We learn a lot from Israel and I hope that Israel also learns a little from us. It's a partnership of equals. A partnership of friends".
CFI Parliamentary Reception, January 2018

"[CFI] make sure that Israel has a clear voice in the British Parliament, making sure that the issues of Israel are properly heard and understood".
CFI Parliamentary Reception, January 2018

RT. HON. JEREMY HUNT MP FOREIGN SECRETARY

"This has been a year of landmarks, including the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, the 70th Anniversary of Israel's statehood, and the first British royal visit, made by HRH The Duke of Cambridge in June... At a time when many worry about the corrosive impact of antisemitism, I want to reiterate our rejection of such ugly intolerance. We are proud of Britain's Jewish community, who make such a positive contribution to all aspects of our society and to public life. Long may that continue".
Message for Rosh Hashanah, September 2018



Environment Secretary Michael Gove at CFI Annual Business Lunch 2017

RT. HON. MICHAEL GOVE MP ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS SECRETARY

"To me, Israel is an inspiration. It shows that the human spirit can achieve amazing things against incredible odds... The Jewish people after millennia of persecution built a home while surrounded by enemies and made that home a beacon of liberty. Israel's vibrant democracy, respect for individual freedom and restlessly innovative culture make it an example to others".
Jewish Chronicle, April 2018

"No greater success story could have been invented, and no greater source of hope could have been imagined than the creation, preservation and present thriving of the world's one and only Jewish State".
CFI Annual Business Lunch, December 2017

RT. HON. DR LIAM FOX MP INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARY

"The UK is already the number one destination in Europe for Israeli investment, with over 300 companies already operating here. Yet there is more to be done and more to be achieved. One of the things that I am proud of in my department has been the creation of a UK-Israel Trade Working Group, designed to identify and remove barriers to trade between our two countries. This will not only strengthen our bilateral relationship, but provide a strong foundation for further progress upon our exit from the EU, as well as providing greater prosperity, stability and security in Israel itself".
Jewish Care business breakfast, October 2017



AN HISTORIC VISIT: HRH THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE IN ISRAEL

In June 2018, HRH The Duke of Cambridge, travelled to Israel for the first official Royal visit in the Jewish State's 70-year history.

The Duke of Cambridge's landmark trip included meetings with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a sightseeing tour of the Old City of Jerusalem, a visit to Tel Aviv's famed beaches and even a walk along the city's Rothschild Boulevard with Netta, Israel's Eurovision 2018 winner.

During his visit, The Duke celebrated the UK-Israel relationship as having "never been stronger" and reflected on Israel's "remarkable story".

"Israel's remarkable story is partly one of remembering this terrible past but, also, looking forward to a much more hopeful future. There is – and I've seen it already – an essential vibrancy to this country".

HRH The Duke of Cambridge.

Addressing a reception at the British Embassy, The Duke pledged: "The United Kingdom stands with you, as we work together for a peaceful and prosperous future".

Prince William began his much-anticipated trip to Israel with a visit to Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial. Accompanied by Chief

Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, The Duke had a guided tour of the museum and memorial, met two survivors of the Kindertransport and laid a wreath for victims of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem's Hall of Remembrance.

The Duke of Cambridge met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at his residence in Jerusalem, where

they were joined by descendants of Haimaki and Rachel Cohen, who were saved in Greece during the Holocaust by Princess Alice of Battenberg, his great-grandmother.

Israel's President Reuven Rivlin asked The Duke to send a "message of peace" to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas ahead of his visit to Ramallah in the West Bank.

The packed itinerary afforded the Duke plenty of opportunities to meet ordinary Israelis, including young artists, high-tech entrepreneurs, environmentalists, and even a beach volleyball team.

In Jaffa, the Duke of Cambridge, who is the President of the Football Association, played football with a group of Israeli Jews and Arabs from the British Embassy-backed Equalizer project and the Peres Center for Peace. The project seeks to promote peaceful coexistence across Israeli communities by bringing children together through their shared love of sport.

In the West Bank, The Duke of Cambridge met with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and the Mayor of Ramallah, Musa Hadid. Prince William sampled local food and culture, and met young footballers. He also met mothers and babies receiving vaccinations at a clinic operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

On his final morning, The Duke concluded his visit with a tour of the Old City of Jerusalem's historic and religious sites. The Duke of Cambridge visited the Western Wall with Chief Rabbi Mirvis, and placed a note between its famous stones, pausing for a moment of reflection, before seeing the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Temple Mount.

Reflecting on what he had seen in Israel, the Duke of Cambridge said: "Israel's remarkable story is partly one of remembering this terrible past but, also, looking forward to a much more hopeful future. There is – and I've seen it already – an essential vibrancy to this country".

He said: "From the early stories of the kibbutzim; to the revival of Hebrew as a living, modern language; to the hi-tech economies that we see around us here in Tel Aviv – the modern story of Israel is one of inventing, creating, innovating, and striding confidently into its future".

The Prince underlined his hope for peace between Israelis and Palestinians: "I know I share a desire with all of you, and with your neighbours, for a just and lasting peace. The United Kingdom stands with you, as we work together for a peaceful and prosperous future".

Writing for the Jerusalem Post, CFI Parliamentary Chairmen Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP and Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles said: "The timing of the visit was highly poignant – occurring not only as Israel celebrates its 70th birthday, but also so soon after the UK marked 'with pride' the centenary of the Balfour Declaration... Symbolically, the trip highlighted that the long-standing cooperation between the UK and Israel is being celebrated in a more public and high-profile way than ever before".



HRH The Duke of Cambridge with beach volleyball players in Tel Aviv



IN CONVERSATION WITH CFI PARLIAMENTARY CHAIRMEN, RT. HON. STEPHEN CRABB MP AND RT. HON. LORD PICKLES

In June 2018, the Conservative Friends of Israel family grew when Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Pickles became a member of the House of Lords, soon after joining Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP as joint CFI Parliamentary Chairmen.

CFI Informed Editor Sedef Akademir sat down with CFI's Parliamentary Chairmen to hear about how they plan to take the organisation forward and what they think the future holds for the UK-Israel relationship.

Why is Israel important to you and why have you been friends of Israel for so long?

Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles: I fell in love with Israel and its people nearly 40 years ago. In that time I have seen a lot of changes. The oranges are still wonderful, but now they are overshadowed by innovation and high-tech solutions to the world's problems.

Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP: From a young age I have found the 'Israel Story' both fascinating and inspiring – the rebirth of an ancient nation which, against all odds, has grown

and prospered into the beacon of liberty and innovation it is today. Coming from Wales, I have a strong empathy with small, outward-looking nations and I am proud to be a friend of Israel.

What are your plans as Parliamentary Chairmen of CFI?

Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles: To deepen cooperation between myself and Stephen in Parliament. Together we will show the real Israel, challenge preconceptions, and work for an even deeper friendship between the UK and Israel.

Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP: With the centenary of the Balfour Declaration and the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, the last twelve months have been a time of celebration for UK-Israel relations. CFI supporters in Parliament have been active in ensuring that these moments have been honoured and recognised in debates and questions to Ministers. The priorities for this year are to continue to celebrate the flourishing relationship between our two nations, for example in the fields of trade and science, but also to show renewed determination in challenging the lies and distortions of those who are hostile to Israel. Educating and informing colleagues through briefings and delegations to Israel will continue to be a key part of our work.

What is your fondest memory of visiting Israel with CFI?

Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP: My first visit in 2007, as a new MP, and the overwhelming sense of history, the amazing mix of cultures, and the warmth and humour of Israelis. It was a special visit and I have loved going back.

Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles: Planting the first of many trees in my name on a rain drenched day overlooking Jerusalem. Under a barely adequate umbrella, gently watering an oversoaked sapling, accompanied by the brave Israeli Ambassador to the Court of St James (also poorly protected from the weather) and then looking back to see all my other CFI chums peeping out of a warm dry tent!

What did you make of the first ever official Royal visit to Israel by HRH The Duke of Cambridge, Prince William?

Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles: A wonderful visit, where HRH got a chance to enjoy a young country that is full of vibrance and vitality with a clear sense of vision. It was not just the great images that pinged their way

back to the UK, it was a feeling that The Duke got a touch of why we feel so strongly about such a reliable ally in the Middle East.

Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP: It was a unique and hugely important moment for the UK-Israel relationship. The warm and enthusiastic reception that The Duke received by people from all backgrounds in Israel underlined the depth of affection and respect between our two nations. I hope it will open the door to further Royal visits in the future.

Why do you think there are so many who try to delegitimise the State of Israel?

Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP: The resurgence of antisemitism in Europe is deeply alarming. There are some, particularly on the extreme left in British politics, whose views have been shaped by a proliferation of lies and conspiracy theories on social media. They have no grasp of the history of the region or of Israel's current challenges. They claim to be in favour of peace but their poison and prejudice actually undermine efforts to restart the peace process.

Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles: Racism and antisemitism stalk our world, but a free people will always triumph.

What makes the Conservative Party such a strong supporter of Israel?

Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles: We share the values of democracy, independent judiciary and a free press. Those are very solid things to have in common between friends.

Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP: The core values of the Conservative Party are freedom, enterprise and a commitment to liberal democracy. As the only thriving democracy in a troubled region where sadly tolerance and freedom are in retreat, Israel is a natural friend and ally.

What do you think the future holds for UK-Israel relations?

Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles: More cooperation on biotech, transport, medicine, software and innovation. Together working for peace in a turbulent region.

Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP: The future is bright for UK-Israel relations. The UK is one of Israel's biggest export markets and the growing trade between our two nations will continue to flourish as new partnerships in science, technology and security develop and bear fruit. It is vitally important that the diplomatic relationship continues to strengthen to help underpin these ventures.



CFI Parliamentary Chairmen in Israel, February 2017



Reuters

WE STAND SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Rt. Hon. James Brokenshire MP



In my role as Communities Secretary I've seen first-hand how important the contribution of the Jewish community across the United Kingdom is. Whether through community housing, providing education or even emergency services such as Hatzola, the Jewish community is a cherished and an essential part of what makes Britain great. I want to extend my thanks to all of you who give so much and say how pleased I am to contribute to this magazine.

And yet in 2018, despite this wonderful work, there are still some people who would try to diminish the contribution the Jewish community makes to our nation. Even when cloaked by a veil of misinformation, or as so often seems stupidity, we must always be vigilant against the grim rising spectre of antisemitism. That is why the Government remains committed to rooting out and challenging this bigotry wherever it presents itself.

And this is personal for me. My father-in-law escaped Nazi Germany to Britain as a small child and his father – my children's great-grandfather – was interned in Buchenwald in the aftermath of Kristallnacht, although, mercifully, was reunited with the family. I am particularly honoured to be involved in building a fitting memorial to the Holocaust in Britain. Over 70 years on, it continues to shape our society as more evidence and testimony is revealed.

We will continue to keep the Jewish community safe and I am proud that our Government allocates £13.4 million to protect Jewish institutions across the UK. The Community



Communities Secretary with Hatzola volunteer

Security Trust's figures reveal that antisemitic incidents in Britain are the second highest on record, so it's vital that we relentlessly combat this prejudice and its various guises.

The key to defeating antisemitism and intolerance is through education, and there can be no more powerful symbol of our commitment to remembering the men, women and children who were murdered in the Holocaust than by placing a new National Memorial and Learning Centre to the Holocaust in Victoria Tower Gardens in the shadow of our Parliament. We must teach future generations what happened and where hatred can lead.

Our Government spearheaded the fight against antisemitism by ensuring the United Kingdom was the first country in the world to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) modern working definition of antisemitism. It has since been adopted by 31 countries, as well as more than 130 UK local councils, the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the judiciary.

As Conservatives this is something we should take enormous pride in and I'd like to pay tribute to Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles who plays such an instrumental role as the UK's Special Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues.

2018 has been a difficult year for the Jewish community. But I want to make a clear promise: this Government will stand shoulder to shoulder with the UK's great Jewish community in the fight against antisemitism. This is not just your fight. This is a fight for us all.

It's because of organisations like Conservative Friends of Israel that the messages of remembrance, education, respect and hope remain so fresh in our hearts and minds. Your work to help promote better relations between the United Kingdom and Israel through educational visits and events are hugely important. I'm grateful to its executive and members, past and present, for growing Conservative Friends of Israel from its beginning in 1974 to become the force it is today.

CFI DELEGATIONS TO ISRAEL

View to Jerusalem Old City, Israel. SJ Travel Photo and Video, Shutterstock.

Baroness Jenkin of Kennington

Co-Founder and Co-Chair of Women2Win



It is horrifying to think what could have happened if the Israeli farmer working in his potato field in the Israeli border kibbutz of Ein HaShlosa hadn't alerted the IDF to voices he heard coming from underground. IDF units responding to the report uncovered a cross-border tunnel dug by the Hamas terror group into Israeli territory, which was connected to a vast network of underground tunnels in the Gaza Strip.

In February 2018, on the first day in Israel after my last visit with CFI over 25 years ago, I was able to see it for myself.

We learned from IDF officials that the tunnel was designed to be used to abduct Israeli soldiers or carry out large-scale terror attacks. A terror tunnel similar to the one we saw was used in the 2006 kidnapping of IDF soldier Gilad Shalit, and the killing of two other soldiers.

The sophisticated structures include electricity cables and phone cables, so militants 50 feet underground can maintain contact with their teams.

The experience made a real impact on us, and naturally shaped our conversations throughout the rest of the week.

We met a wide range of Israeli and Palestinian politicians, journalists and analysts, as well as visiting charities and high-tech companies. The briefings were excellent and the discussions open and broad-ranging.

My personal highlight was a trip to Save a Child's Heart (SACH), an Israeli NGO providing life-saving



Conservative parliamentarians in front of terror tunnel entrance

heart surgery for children from the developing world and the Palestinian Territories.

We visited on a Tuesday, when SACH runs a weekly clinic in the Wolfson Medical Center in Holon for Palestinian children from Gaza and the West Bank, accompanied to Israel by their parents.

Meeting these Israelis and Palestinians who not only coexist, but thrive together, was truly uplifting. We were given a glimpse into what a future peace could look like, if both sides come together in the spirit of coexistence. This is the sort of organisation that DfID should be supporting.

Israel's economic development and transformation over the last quarter-decade is breathtaking. Despite the threats the country faces,

it still continues to be a tolerant and outward-looking society.

Israel's overseas aid organisations are often the first on the scene at humanitarian disasters, and Israeli NGOs such as Innovation Africa bring Israeli solar, water and agricultural innovations to rural African villages.

Meeting Sivan Ya'ari, the organisation's inspiring founder and CEO, in Parliament after the trip brought home to me the importance of parliamentarians showcasing Israel's incredible work on our return to the UK.

Visiting the country and talking widely to different groups and individuals is the only way to truly understand the challenges Israel faces, and to witness its generosity in the face of immense regional hostility.

Steve Double MP
St Austell and Newquay



During the Easter 2018 recess, I had the privilege of visiting Israel and the West Bank with CFI and a number of my parliamentary colleagues. Having visited Israel before, but only to the main religious sites, I felt I had previously only scratched the surface of this small country that is at the heart of so much political debate.

Our itinerary was packed with meetings, briefings and experiences, where we were fully immersed into all sides of the country.

Seeing the security barrier in person was an eye-opener. Often viewed from our TV screens, it is presented as an imposing structure and a physical divide. We were given a first-hand tour by the man who built it, Col. Dany Tirza, and I was surprised to learn that 95% of the barrier is made up of fence and only 5% concrete. Since it was erected in 2002, terror attacks which were near daily at the height of the Second Intifada have drastically reduced.

In Jerusalem, we commemorated Yom Hashoah, Israel's Holocaust Remembrance Day, at the state opening ceremony at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, where we heard from the Prime Minister and President of Israel. Laying a wreath in a deeply moving ceremony, we paid tribute to the defenceless women, men and children murdered in the Holocaust. That morning at 10am we had heard the remembrance sirens ringing out across the country, bringing traffic and bustling cities to a halt as people stood to pay their respects.

It was a stark reminder of why the State of Israel exists today – a home and refuge for the Jewish people.

In the West Bank, we visited the capital city of Ramallah where we met with Chief Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiator Saeb Erekat.

Beforehand we had been briefed by Palestinian polling expert Dr Khalil Shikaki on the latest public opinion trends among Israelis and Palestinians. I was surprised to discover that Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas had entered his 14th year in office. With the absence of elections and accusations of widespread corruption, we learnt that the Palestinian youth had become disillusioned with the old-guard PLO leadership.

There have been no peace talks between the Israelis and Palestinians since 2014. Despite this, I learned

that polling has revealed that roughly half of Palestinians and Israelis are still supportive of a two-state solution. Hearing this and seeing the situation on the ground has convinced me that direct talks between both parties must be urgently renewed.

Our tour guide – a young Palestinian from East Jerusalem – was very candid in answering our at times difficult questions in one of the most interesting conversations we had. It was eye-opening to hear him speak from his perspective about life in East Jerusalem and the prospects for peace in the region.

I would like to thank CFI for this opportunity – a visit that was enlightening and one that I will never forget. I would certainly recommend others to go and see this extraordinary country with all its complexities for themselves.



Conservative parliamentarians with Col. Dany Tirza in front of security barrier

Best wishes from

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BEYOND BREXIT: CHAMPIONING UK- ISRAEL TRADE

Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP

In June 2018, after travelling to Israel with CFI, I wrote an article for the Times of Israel urging those involved in planning HRH The Duke of Cambridge's historic visit later that month to ensure he saw "the true Israel".

The true Israel, in my eyes, is a powerhouse of innovation and creativity.

I am delighted that The Duke indeed witnessed Israel at its very best; from walking down Rothschild Boulevard with Eurovision winner Netta Barzilai, to experiencing a brilliant technology showcase by Israeli startups ReWalk, OrCam, Algobrix and MindLift, which provide solutions to help improve people's lives.

I was keen to visit this fascinating country again after many years, and leading a trade-focused CFI delegation at the end of May gave me the perfect opportunity.

Our own four-day itinerary was comparably jam-packed, consisting of meetings with Israel's leading companies, political briefings and discussions with organisations developing life-saving technologies in Israel and around the world.

We first travelled south to the impressive Gav-Yam Negev Advanced Technologies Park in Be'er Sheva, which is set to become Israel's new high-tech and cyber security centre. Located next to

Ben-Gurion University and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Technology Campus, the park facilitates unique collaboration between students, international companies and the IDF.

One visit that made a significant impression on me was the Israeli drinks company SodaStream's factory in Rahat, where we met a Palestinian line manager in charge of Israeli Jewish, Arab and Bedouin workers. This demonstrated the company's celebration of diversity but at the same time exposed the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement for the harm it had caused to the Palestinians who lost their jobs when the factory was pressured to relocate. I am delighted to see that since that visit, PepsiCo have agreed to buy SodaStream for \$3.2 billion, securing more jobs and an environmentally friendly approach to the soft drinks industry.

Opening the ever-growing Tel Aviv Stock Exchange was a true once in a lifetime experience, but there was another memorable moment that I keep reflecting on – a visit to the Magen David Adom (MDA) ambulance dispatch centre in Jerusalem. We were shown how MDA's advanced technologies have significantly shortened response times to medical emergencies, and how its pioneering video communication software enables medics to receive a live

feed of an emergency before first responders arrive.

Israeli expertise already benefits British citizens in so many ways, from text messaging to the Waze smartphone navigation app. Brexit provides an opportunity for even greater collaboration between our two countries, and thanks to the fantastic work of the CFI team we have a far greater idea of what this could look like.

On returning to the UK, my parliamentary colleagues and I highlighted the key areas of existing cooperation in a debate in Parliament on UK-Israel trade, and welcomed assurances from the Government that the UK seeks to strengthen the bilateral trading relationship in the coming years.

I'm also pleased to write that since the visit took place, UK Government figures revealed that in the past year Israeli investment into the UK soared by 97% to £298 million, creating hundreds of new jobs and countering the narrative of fear around investment into Britain post-Brexit.

We will be publishing a report celebrating UK-Israel ties and promoting a post-Brexit trade deal, made possible by this memorable visit – watch this space.



Conservative parliamentarians on CFI delegation open Tel Aviv Stock Exchange



Conservative parliamentarians visit SodaStream factory

"Brexit offers new opportunities to maximize our important trading relationship and it is imperative that we reach a free trade agreement with Israel as soon as possible".

Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP



400

Israeli companies operate in the UK



£6.9bn

Total bilateral trade between the UK and Israel



£298m

Invested in UK by Israeli companies from June 2017 to June 2018



97%

Israeli investment increased in the UK compared to same period in previous year



BRITAIN AND ISRAEL: THE ECOSYSTEM OF COLLABORATION

Sam Gyimah MP, Minister for
Universities, Science, Research and
Innovation

The Israeli story is tremendously positive – a small country that has become an engine room for ideas and the start-up nation of the world.

As my plane came in to land at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv in May 2018, I was looking forward to discussing important issues in Higher Education and further strengthening our ties in all things science, research and innovation.

We want the best and brightest from the UK and Israel to work closely together on ground-breaking research. This is why I met with the Vice-Chancellors from leading universities and research institutions to discuss how we can deepen our research collaborations and cooperate on the great challenges facing society.

Life at university was a prominent area we discussed including the boycotting of Israel at our institutions and more widely, the inexcusable and disgraceful spate of antisemitism that has been reported on some campuses in the UK and how we can stamp it out. We also discussed what more we could do to help facilitate student exchanges between the UK and Israel.

This too was the focus of my visit to Ramallah in the West Bank where I met with leaders of universities to



Minister Akunis and Minister Gyimah in the Knesset in Jerusalem

announce a new scheme to help Palestinian students study in the UK.

I heard about how Israel has used innovation as a source of growth not just in the tech hotbed of Tel Aviv, but around the country. I met with leading venture capitalists like the JVP group and a whole series of young, and hugely impressive, entrepreneurs. The cyber security cluster in Be'er Sheva is a great example – something I know the UK,

with our expertise on cyber security in Cheltenham at GCHQ, is learning from.

We have already achieved so much in our partnership with Israel, particularly through the UK Israel Tech Hub, which seeks to boost our economy and help Israeli businesses gain more access to global markets. So far, we've seen some 175 tech partnerships with deals worth almost £100 million with more to come.



Minister Gyimah at BIRAX event in London



Minister Gyimah and H.E. Ambassador Mark Regev at the opening of the London Stock Exchange

“We want the best and the brightest from the UK and Israel to work closely together on ground-breaking research”.

It was a privilege to meet Ofir Akunis MK, the Minister for Science, and Eli Cohen MK, the Minister for Industry and the Economy, to discuss the importance of building an innovation-driven economy and attracting direct foreign investment, putting pen to paper on a series of new and exciting agreements.

These will boost innovation, academic and scientific collaboration between the UK and Israel – such as the new £10 million Britain Israel Research and Academic Exchange (BIRAX) which will explore the potential for artificial intelligence in helping solve the challenges raised by an ageing society as well as support the companies making these breakthroughs. We also signed a multi-million pound deal with the Israeli Innovation Authority to support pioneering ideas in fields including artificial intelligence and developing new and advanced materials.

Developing this ecosystem of collaboration will allow Israeli and British companies, large and small, to flourish and be at the forefront of new technologies that will benefit the economy, society and create jobs.

The core reason for my visit to Israel was to further strengthen the close ties that exist between our two great countries and to highlight how deep our relationship runs, furthering the excellent work already done by H.E. Mark Regev, the Israeli Ambassador to the UK and H.E. David Quarrey, the British Ambassador to Israel.

This was reinforced by the visit of His Royal Highness, Prince William, as well as a trade-focused visit of a delegation of my Conservative colleagues to the country with the Conservative Friends of Israel; a group who have played such a vital role in fostering our relationship and will do so in the future.

Israel is a great example of a country with a clear sense of its economic destiny: using tech and enterprise and being a great place to build truly global companies. We can learn from this – as we plot a course for Britain after Brexit. Double down on our ingenuity, be open to the world, and embrace the spirit of entrepreneurship.

We achieved a great deal on this trip, but there is still much more to do. Israel and the UK are both scientific and innovation superpowers, and like the superheroes we see on the big screen, when we work together we can achieve almost anything.

ISRAEL AT 70: A TIMELINE OF ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2018, people in the UK, Israel, and around the world celebrated 70 years since the birth of the State of Israel. Here are some of the milestones in Israel's extraordinary history.

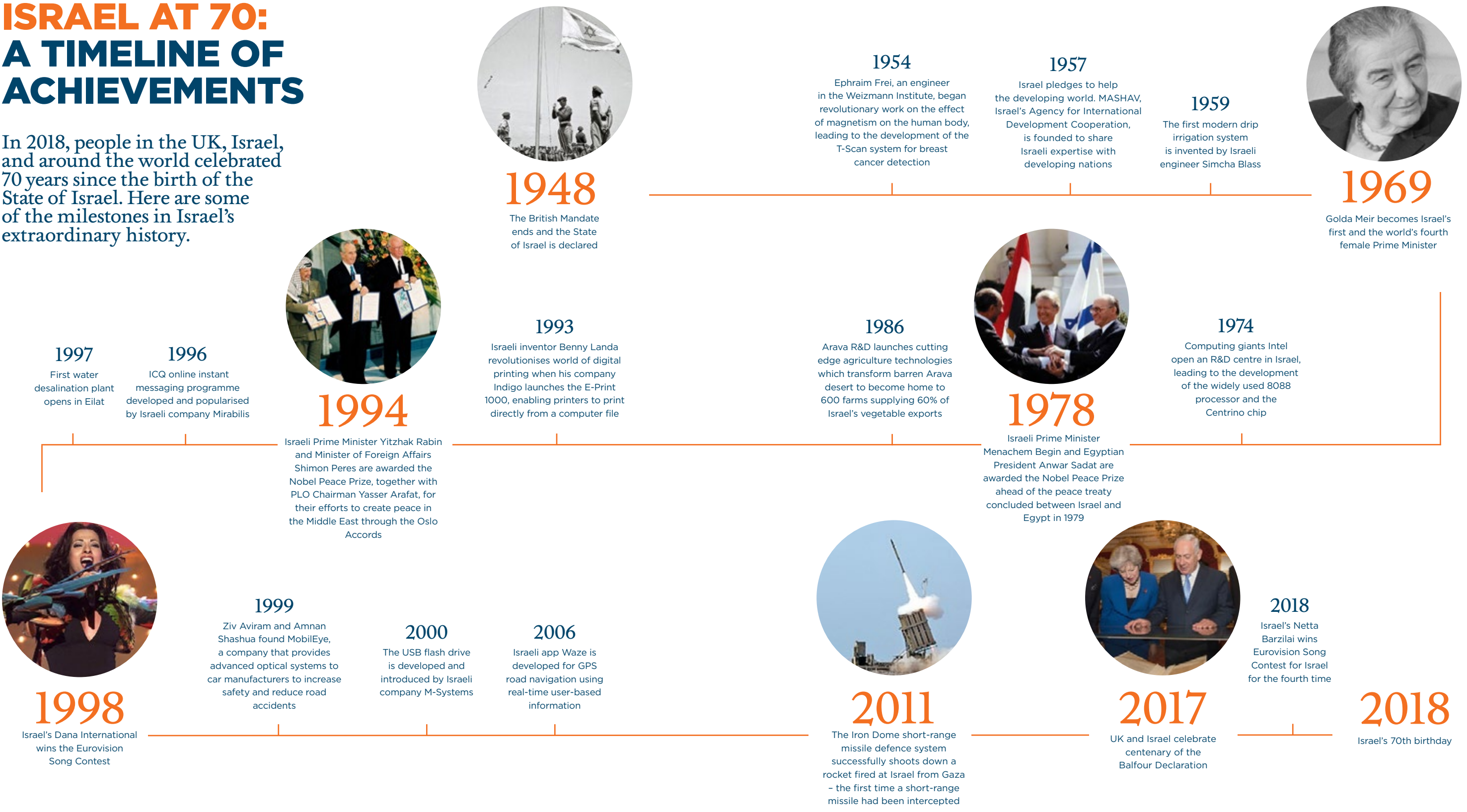


Photo credit: AP, Eurovision, Getty Images

ISRAEL'S EUROVISION WIN IS A TRIUMPH AGAINST BDS

Paul Masterton MP

CFI Parliamentary Officer



“Eurovision in Israel will be a chance for young Europeans to also see the country in all its beautiful diversity”.

who in 2010 sponsored a House of Commons motion to enforce a ban on Israel taking part in European events like Eurovision, viewers in Europe put politics to one side and voted for the best performance of the night.

Indeed, the song earned the fourth-highest score in the competition's 63-year history. Juries and viewers determine 50% of the scores each, but it was in the public vote that Israel excelled. Israel would have come in third place had it been solely up to the official juries of the 43 countries that took part. In the audience vote, Israel beat its nearest rival Cyprus by nearly 100 points – a resounding victory.

It might also surprise some that among countries to award 12 points to Israel in the public vote, was majority Shi'ite Muslim Azerbaijan.

At a time where the BDS campaign continues to pressure artists not to

perform in Israel, Netta's success confirmed what we already knew – that the campaigners are merely a vocal, ugly and small minority of the population.

I am proud of our Government's consistent and unequivocal rejection of such campaigns, which unfairly hold all Israelis accountable for their government's policies.

Israel is a country that stands in stark contrast to the rest of the region. Already, in fact, Turkey's regime has ruled out a return to the contest until the show bans LGBT contestants.

I have seen for myself when I visited Israel with CFI in February 2018, a multi-religious, multi-ethnic society that cherishes freedom of speech and where LGBT pride marches are attended by hundreds of thousands.

Eurovision in Israel will be a chance for young Europeans to also see the country in all its beautiful diversity.

Every year millions of us in Britain – many of my parliamentary colleagues included – tune into the Eurovision Song Contest.

I was delighted to see Israeli contestant Netta Barzilai sweep to victory at the end of the night with 'Toy' – her unconventional and extremely catchy anthem of empowerment. With its lyrics inspired by the feminist #MeToo movement, the uptempo number which featured clucking and a chicken dance was not just another quirky Eurovision song.

While this was in fact the fourth time that Israel had won Eurovision, this year's triumph came as Israelis celebrated 70 years as an independent country. Israel last won the contest in 1998 where the iconic Dana International took the top spot with her song 'Diva'.

The results were unsurprisingly greeted with jubilant scenes in Israel, with thousands gathering to celebrate in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square and Jerusalem's Machane Yehuda Market.

Despite the best efforts of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, including the current leader of the Labour Party





IRAN'S REGIONAL AGGRESSION HAS BROUGHT TOGETHER UNLIKELY ALLIES

Rt. Hon. Theresa Villiers MP,
CFI Vice-Chairman

When the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iran's nuclear programme was signed between Iran and P5+1 world powers in July 2015, many hailed the event as a sign the country was turning its face towards the West.

Yet while Iran and some of the international community enjoyed a thawing in relations, the grave omissions in the JCPOA are having a major impact on many of those in the closest proximity to the country.

Iran's hatred of Israel is well-known. A glance at the social media accounts of leading Iranian regime officials will reveal an unending stream of abuse, explicit threats and hostility towards what they refer to as the "Zionist entity".

Just consider for a moment that in June 2018, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei announced on Twitter that Israel was a "malignant cancerous tumour" to be "removed and eradicated". With no attempt to conceal the regime's intentions, he had previously posted a nine-point plan of "key questions about the elimination of Israel".

But now it is not just Israel which is worrying about the aggression of the Iranian regime. One of the most significant developments to occur in the Middle East in recent years is that new alliances are being forged

through shared concern about the threat of Iranian regional hegemony.

Since the signing of the nuclear deal, Iran has significantly advanced its ballistic missile development, with over 30 ballistic missiles estimated to have been test-fired, in a clear defiance of UN Security Council resolutions. The launches are a belligerent gesture to its neighbours.

Gulf countries are also rightly concerned that Iran's military backing of Houthi rebels in Yemen and support for Shia militia in Iraq are destabilising factors in the region. With its tightening grip in Syria and steady support for Hezbollah, Iran has been allowed to flex its muscles largely unchecked. This demonstrates what a grave error it was to omit any clause in the JCPOA to constrain the regime's sponsorship of terror groups.

For too long, Iran has provided funding, training and weapons for terrorist groups, and as a result, the most unexpected of partnerships have been created.

In a sign of changing times, Saudi Arabia in March 2018 for the first time allowed a commercial Indian plane heading to Israel to fly over its air space. This is an unprecedented development. In the same month, the Israeli Air Force and the United Arab Emirates took part in a joint training exercise in Greece, despite having no diplomatic relations.

Significantly, the Saudi Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, recognised Israel's right to exist in an April 2018 interview in the US magazine The Atlantic, where he spoke of the prospect of future diplomatic relations between his Kingdom and the Jewish State.

Behind the scenes, these emerging ties between Israel and the Gulf states have opened up new opportunities. There is even discussion of reviving a Saudi-sponsored Arab Peace Initiative.


There is, of course, still a long way to go before we see Israeli Embassies in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, but these recent developments would have been inconceivable a few short years ago. So whilst the news can often seem bleak from the Middle East, there are glimmers of hope as well.



Iran launching long-range Emad ballistic missile

CST wishes every success to all of our friends and colleagues at Conservative Friends of Israel.



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THE ‘BOMB SHELTER CAPITAL OF THE WORLD’

Lord Shinkwin



Just imagine: a typical playground – a place of fun, of safety, of slides, swings and climbing frames. So why the caterpillar-shaped tunnel? And why is it so large and made of reinforced concrete? “In case of a rocket attack”, you are told. Little boys the world over love nothing more than pretend shooting, but real rockets, at the end of your street? Why would anyone need a bomb shelter tunnel in their playground?

We do not need bomb shelters here in the UK for the simple reason that we are not under attack. They do need them, however, in ‘the Bomb Shelter Capital of the World’, the Israeli border town of Sderot, because they are, constantly.

I went inside its playground caterpillar tunnel on a visit to Israel in September 2016. That trip opened my eyes to a simple truth: it is too easy to underplay the immensity and immediacy of the threat which Israel, and especially the 28 Israeli communities living within five kilometres of the Gaza border, face.

We need to ask ourselves what would happen if just one of the attempts at infiltration were successful. Helpfully, the terrorist group Hamas have already provided the answer: “We will take down the border, and we will tear out their hearts from their bodies”. Fighting talk from Yahya Sinwar, Hamas’ leader in Gaza, but then this is presumably a warrior eager to engage in combat with soldiers. Except that they are not the principal targets; Israeli civilians are.



Bomb shelter tunnel in playground of Sderot

In the 24 hours before yet another infiltration attempt on 24th May 2018, maps were posted on Gazan social media. They detailed the quickest way to reach Israeli civilians in the communities closest to the border fence.

Only 11 days earlier, Hamas told would-be infiltrators on Facebook to “bring a knife or a gun [and] hide them under their clothes and [only] use them...to capture...as [they are] an important bargaining chip of which the Israelis are afraid”.

They are right to be afraid. Hamas’ genocidal intent is stated in their founding charter. The terror group hates Israel just for being. It is a hatred the intensity of which we have never encountered in the UK.

Israelis’ fear of destruction is commensurate with the actual threat posed by Hamas, Hezbollah and their paymaster, Iran. It is their enemies’ shared objective, and it is the Jewish people’s experience of attempted annihilation which makes it imperative that it should be resisted.

Though we would never know it from the media coverage, Hamas could stop its murderous, hatred-fuelled campaign of infiltration tomorrow. Were it to engage in meaningful negotiations instead, I believe it would be surprised how quickly the dynamic would change.

Sderot without caterpillar tunnels. Just imagine.



TACKLING HATE ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

Hen Mazzig

Much has been said about freedom of speech being shut down on university campuses across the UK and I should know, given that in 2016 around 300 students attempted to prevent me from speaking at University College London (UCL).

Universities are rightly celebrated as a forum for freedom of expression, where ideas are openly exchanged and debated. Since my experience, I have been encouraged that we are starting to see a backlash against intolerance.

Intimidation and dissent can take many forms. But on my visit to UCL, I experienced protesters jumping through windows and banging on the walls, alongside the chant “from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” – a less than subtle call for the destruction of Israel. I had to be rushed off the campus by the Metropolitan Police, when it became clear that I was in physical danger.

Following this alarming incident, I was invited back to an event in 2017 that was moderated by the Provost of UCL. The event took place in a location that was heavily guarded, with private security and police. I was loudly greeted by around 80 protesters who came with the aim of once again shutting me down.

What these activists supposedly objected to was my service in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), which they characterise as an army of war

criminals. I served in the COGAT unit, where I used my Arabic skills to work as an intermediary between the IDF and the Palestinian Authority, promoting humanitarian cooperation. But this was of little concern to a faction of activists who condemn ‘normalisation’ between Israelis and Palestinians.

You may also recall that a similar much-publicised incident took place at King’s College London in the same year, where an Israel Society event was disrupted by violent demonstrators who smashed a window and intimidated students. The Israeli guest speaker was a left-wing peace activist and former head of Shin Bet. Again, peace counts for nothing amongst this crowd.

The repulsive ‘Israel Apartheid Week’ that takes place across UK campuses annually has been cited as creating a poisonous atmosphere for Jewish and Israeli students. It is striking that no other nationality is targeted in this manner – nor should they be.

My experience in the UK was disturbing, but it is even more heartbreaking to think about the experience of British Jews today, who have their identities constantly questioned and challenged.

The reputation of the UK as a hub for anti-Israel activity has not been without consequence. Figures from the Higher Education Statistics Authority in 2017 sadly reveal a dramatic 32% fall in the number of Israelis choosing to study in Britain.

I am pleased that the Conservative Government has taken action to counter this prejudice. In 2017, the then-Universities Minister Jo Johnson wrote to the Chief Executive of Universities UK to underline the obligation of all UK higher education institutions to tackle antisemitism on campus, particularly in the context of ‘Israel Apartheid Week’.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid has been a relentless voice against antisemitism and in January 2018, announced that the UK Government will provide £144,000 in new funding to combat hatred against Jews on university campuses.

These actions send a clear signal to those that wish to hassle students and silence open debate on university campuses, and it is for this reason that I look forward to returning to the UK to continue promoting Israel, peaceful coexistence and open dialogue.



Hen Mazzig addresses Conservative MPs at CFI parliamentary briefing



H. FORMAN & SON

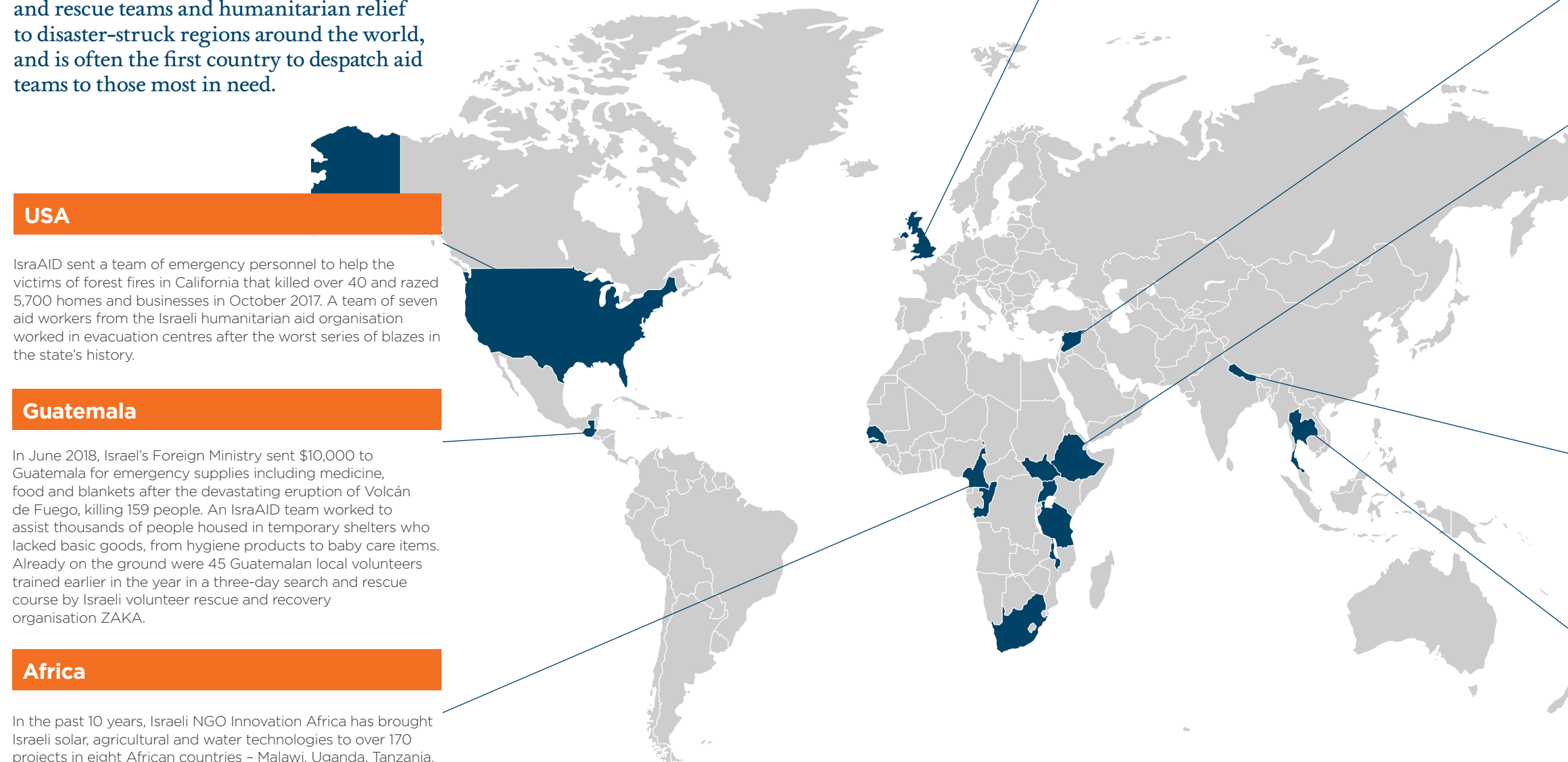


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ISRAEL'S GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN AID

Since its inception, the State of Israel has stood proudly as a beacon of humanitarian endeavours, its international aid programmes benefiting millions across the globe. Israel is world-renowned in sending both search and rescue teams and humanitarian relief to disaster-struck regions around the world, and is often the first country to despatch aid teams to those most in need.

This map details just some of Israel's humanitarian aid work around the world.



USA

IsraAID sent a team of emergency personnel to help the victims of forest fires in California that killed over 40 and razed 5,700 homes and businesses in October 2017. A team of seven aid workers from the Israeli humanitarian aid organisation worked in evacuation centres after the worst series of blazes in the state's history.

Guatemala

In June 2018, Israel's Foreign Ministry sent \$10,000 to Guatemala for emergency supplies including medicine, food and blankets after the devastating eruption of Volcán de Fuego, killing 159 people. An IsraAID team worked to assist thousands of people housed in temporary shelters who lacked basic goods, from hygiene products to baby care items. Already on the ground were 45 Guatemalan local volunteers trained earlier in the year in a three-day search and rescue course by Israeli volunteer rescue and recovery organisation ZAKA.

Africa

In the past 10 years, Israeli NGO Innovation Africa has brought Israeli solar, agricultural and water technologies to over 170 projects in eight African countries – Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Ethiopia, and Cameroon. Each project is tracked live, thanks to its Israeli remote monitoring technology.

UK

Israeli humanitarian aid agency IsraAID sent a disaster response team to the UK in January 2016 to help repair homes and distribute food and blankets to flood victims in the north of England.

Syria

The IDF has provided life-saving medical treatment to thousands of wounded Syrians in field hospitals on the border and in public hospitals in northern Israel, since the civil war erupted in 2011. Over 900 Syrian children, accompanied by their mothers, have come to Israel for treatment and hundreds of tonnes of food, medical equipment and clothing have also been sent across the border to Syria since 2016, as part of Operation Good Neighbour. In July 2018, Israel led a rescue effort to save several hundred Syrian civil defence workers, known as the 'White Helmets', from Syria together with their families at the request of the UK and international partners, transporting them from southwest Syria to Jordan via Israel.

South Sudan

In August 2017, six tonnes of food aid from Israel was distributed to villagers in a drought-stricken area of South Sudan. The aid, which was coordinated by the Foreign Ministry's MASHAV Agency for International Development Cooperation and the Israeli Embassy in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, was given out after millions were feared susceptible to famine following a drought.

Nepal

An IsraAID first-response team of 16 volunteers were sent to southern Nepal in August 2017 to bring medical, psychosocial and sanitation assistance in the wake of floods and landslides that claimed 1,611 lives and displaced over one million people.

Thailand

Emergency mobile communications technology developed by Israeli company Maxtech Networks was used by rescue teams in Thailand in July 2018 to maintain communication with 12 teenage boys and their 25-year-old football coach who were trapped inside a flooded cave complex. The plight of the youth football team captured the world's attention, and they were successfully rescued after 18 days.



Magen David Adom

TECHNOLOGY SAVING LIVES

Magen David Adom, Israel's national medical emergency service, were delighted to host a delegation of Conservative parliamentarians in May 2018.

The MDA organisation, which has over 150 stations and over 1,000 lifesaving vehicles, is also responsible for all of Israel's blood collection, processing and distribution. What makes this all the more remarkable is that Magen David Adom is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation that depends on the generosity of donors from across the world.

Magen David Adom UK, based in North West London and active across the country, is one of the Magen David Adom Israel's leading friends associations, donating over £5 million per year. These funds have been used to purchase everything from bandages to ambulance stations and, more recently, to purchase cutting-edge equipment that has been developed using the very latest in Israeli technology.

Our parliamentary guests were able to see some of this ground breaking Israeli tech first-hand, most particularly the MyMDA app, which is the latest innovation in patient treatment.

If a call is made via the app, rather than more traditional means of dialling the emergency number and verbally providing a location, a precise GPS location appears immediately in front of the call-taker who is processing the emergency.

“The parliamentarians were able to see some of this groundbreaking research first-hand”.

This allows for resources to be allocated, even before the nature of the call is known, instantly improving response times.

The game-changing app has further important features that allow for better treatment before the ambulance has arrived. Medical history, for example, can be stored in the app and sent directly when calling for an ambulance.

This is assisted by the fact that the MyMDA app allows for live video streaming of the incident directly to the call-taker in the Dispatch Centre, all of whom are EMTs or paramedics with field experience.

The video streaming is proven to reduce the time taken to diagnose by 22%, assign the most relevant team for the situation, and start providing first-aid instructions over the phone. Phone triage is a notoriously difficult skill to master, and is made even more difficult by callers being unable to describe either the location or the incident itself.

Other benefits include cases of multiple casualties, whether that be road accidents, terror attacks, or any other case where there is more than one patient. These scenes are often chaotic, sometimes in locations that are difficult to describe or locate, or for that matter spread across a wide area, when it would be extremely difficult as a dispatcher to get a clear picture of the scene.

Thanks to the programme developed by MDA, our emergency responders located closest to the incident are able to arrive within minutes and can begin providing life-saving treatment until the ambulance arrives. These minutes can prove to be critical, and the automatic dispatch improves the patient's chance of surviving in these situations.

Magen David Adom is rightly revered as a world leader in emergency medical services and care, and the commitment from supporters in the UK plays a big part in saving more lives.

The UK and Israel already work closely together in so many areas, and it is exciting to think of the possibilities of how the lives of Britons can be saved and improved with the latest emergency response technologies emerging from Israel.



Conservative MPs at MDA Dispatch Centre in Jerusalem

CFI'S CALENDAR 2017/18



SEPTEMBER 2017

- CFI announces Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP as new Parliamentary Chairman in the House of Commons.
- CFI confirms new Parliamentary Group of Vice-Chairmen and Officers, which include parliamentarians who come from all corners of the United Kingdom.
- Prime Minister Theresa May praises UK-Israel relationship and “unequivocally” condemns antisemitism in letter for CFI Informed magazine.



OCTOBER 2017

- CFI hosts Conservative Party Conference Reception with Environment Secretary Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, Ambassador of Israel, H.E. Mark Regev, and senior Conservative MPs, attended by over 500 delegates.
- As many as 20 Conservative MPs voice support for Israel in Westminster Hall debate on the Centenary of the Balfour Declaration.



NOVEMBER 2017

- Prime Minister Theresa May and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu celebrate 100 year anniversary of the Balfour Declaration in London. 100 Conservative MPs and Lords co-sign a letter coordinated by CFI and published in The Daily Telegraph, to celebrate the centenary.
- Cross-party MPs attend a Parliamentary briefing event hosted by CFI and LFI with the Parents Circle – The Bereaved Families Forum, supporting reconciliation and peace between more than 600 Israeli and Palestinian bereaved families.



DECEMBER 2017

- CFI hosts Annual Business Lunch with Environment Secretary Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, where he underlines staunch support for Israel and condemns “dark and furious activism against the Jewish State”. The event is attended by 700 guests, including 170 Conservative parliamentarians and nine Cabinet members.
- Prime Minister Theresa May sends Chanukah message to Jewish community, underlining the Government's commitment to fighting antisemitism.



JANUARY 2018

- CFI hosts Annual Parliamentary Reception with Defence Secretary Rt. Hon. Gavin Williamson MP and Ambassador of Israel, H.E. Mark Regev, attended by 250 supporters, including 50 parliamentarians.
- Conservative MPs attend a CFI Parliamentary briefing with Hen Mazzig, an Israeli political activist and former humanitarian affairs officer in the IDF's COGAT unit.
- CFI Executive Director James Gurd addresses over 30 King's College London students at an event jointly hosted by the university's Conservative and Israel societies.



FEBRUARY 2018

- CFI coordinates a high-profile delegation to Israel and the West Bank led by CFI Parliamentary Chairman (Commons) Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP, where eight Conservative MPs viewed a Hamas terror tunnel found leading into Israel.
- Israel's Science and Technology Minister Ofir Akunis briefs Conservative MPs and Lords at a CFI event in Parliament.



MARCH 2018

- CFI Vice-Chairman Rt. Hon. Theresa Villiers MP and CFI Officer Baroness Altmann CBE welcome a delegation of Israeli women directors to Parliament, in an event to mark International Women's Day.
- CFI Parliamentary Chairman (Lords) Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles hails UK-USA-Israel trilateral relationship in an address to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's (AIPAC) annual policy conference in Washington, D.C.
- Conservative parliamentarians attend cross-party briefing in the House of Commons with Dr Yossi Draznin, Director General of the Israeli Ministry for Regional Cooperation.



APRIL 2018

- CFI leads delegation of five Conservative MPs to Israel and the West Bank, where Yom Hashoah, the Holocaust Remembrance Day, is commemorated at the state opening ceremony at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial.
- 50 Conservative MPs and peers attend a lunch in Parliament hosted by CFI with the Ambassador of Israel, H.E. Mark Regev, to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the State of Israel.
- CFI team celebrates Israel's 70th birthday at CCHQ with a traditional Israeli lunch, joined by Conservative Party Chairman Rt. Hon. Brandon Lewis MP and CCHQ staff.



MAY 2018

- CFI coordinates first ever trade-focused delegation to Israel with eight senior Conservative parliamentarians, led by former Chief Whip Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP, to celebrate record UK-Israel trade, and to explore and promote a future post-Brexit free trade deal.
- CFI team and supporters hold Action Days for Conservative council candidates in key London boroughs of Barnet, Westminster and Camden ahead of Local Elections.
- Members of the CFI team attend the Welsh Conservative Party Conference following a successful delegation of Welsh Conservatives to Israel in 2017.



JUNE 2018

- CFI hosts reception in Westminster to celebrate the ennoblement of Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles, where he is announced as CFI's new Parliamentary Chairman in the House of Lords, alongside Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP (Commons).
- Senior parliamentarians and diplomats attend first ever CFI-Conservative Friends of the Commonwealth (CFOC) event to celebrate Israel's relationship with the UK and growing relationships with Commonwealth countries.
- Conservative MPs condemn Hezbollah's terror activities and urge the UK Government to designate the organisation as a terrorist group in its entirety during a Westminster Hall debate.



JULY 2018

- CFI delegation of five Conservative parliamentarians attend the Annual International Institute for Strategic Leadership Dialogue in Jerusalem, bringing together legislators, business leaders and opinion formers from the UK, Israel, Australia and the U.S.
- 11 Conservative MPs celebrate flourishing trade ties between the UK and Israel in a Westminster Hall debate on UK-Israel trade.
- CFI Parliamentary Chairmen Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP and Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles pen article for the Jerusalem Post about the UK-Israel relationship.



AUGUST 2018

- Chairperson of Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO) Professor Rivka Lazovsky briefs Conservative parliamentarians and supporters about the charity and its work to empower women across all communities in Israel and worldwide, in joint CFI-LFI event.
- CFI prepares for Conservative Party Conference.

SPOTLIGHT ON COEXISTENCE

Shining a light on four organisations and projects working for peace in Israel and the region, visited by Conservative parliamentarians on CFI delegations to Israel and the West Bank:



Save A Child's Heart (SACH)

- Save A Child's Heart, based at the Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, provides life-saving heart surgery to children suffering from congenital and rheumatic heart disease who are unable to receive adequate medical care in their places of birth.
- As many as 5,000 children have so far been treated from 56 countries - from Afghanistan to Zambia, and around half of those treated come from the West Bank and Gaza.
- Over 6,000 Palestinian children have been examined in the weekly cardiology clinic at the hospital, accompanied to Israel by their parents. For many of these children and their parents it is often the first time they have travelled outside of the West Bank and Gaza, and had positive interactions with Israelis.
- Israeli doctors at the hospital provide Palestinian physicians and nurses with in-depth postgraduate training. They later return home to perform surgery themselves, and share their expertise with other Palestinians in the Palestinian Territories.



Beit Issie Shapiro (BIS)

- Beit Issie Shapiro is an Israeli charity leading research into assistive technology to improve the wellbeing and social inclusion of people with disabilities worldwide, across all cultural and religious divides.
- BIS's Sindian Center was established in 2001 as the first early intervention centre in the Arab sector in Israel. The centre is based in Kalansua, a 22,000-population Arab city in central Israel, and was founded on the instruction of the Israeli government. The centre currently serves 42 children with severe disabilities, from the ages of six months to four years.
- The Hope Flowers School in Bethlehem for Palestinian children is working together with Israeli professionals from BIS on special needs education, as part of a European Union-funded project with the support of the British Embassy in Tel Aviv.



Peres Center for Peace

- Founded by the ninth President of Israel and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shimon Peres, the Peres Center for Peace is Israel's leading organisation promoting peacebuilding between Israel and its neighbours (particularly between Israelis and Palestinians), as well as between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel.
- The Peres Center is a non-profit, non-governmental, non-political organisation - developing and implementing a wide range of projects (medicine and healthcare, sport, arts, business, technology) that bring thousands together across Israeli and Palestinian societies.



Middle East Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow (MEET)

- Founded in 2004 at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), MEET is a Palestinian and Israeli youth initiative that envisions a Middle East where Palestinians and Israelis are equal, live in dignity and freedom, and work together to ensure their shared future.
- Volunteer instructors from MIT teach the students computer science, entrepreneurship, and leadership.
- MEET enables its participants to acquire advanced technological and leadership skills while empowering them to create positive social change within their own communities.
- The three-year programme has equal representation between the sexes and Palestinians and Israelis, and consists of 200 students and 385 alumni.

"In the Conservatives I have found my voice"

Kofi, 18

