

# 2018

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# YEAR IN REVIEW

## CFI ANNUAL BUSINESS LUNCH 2018



CFI hosted its biggest ever Annual Business Lunch on 10th December, which was addressed by Prime Minister Theresa May and attended by 800 guests, including 200 Conservative parliamentarians and 17 Cabinet ministers.

In her wide-ranging speech that received a standing ovation from the 800-strong audience, the Prime Minister celebrated the “shared values” that the UK-Israel friendship is built on, hailed the UK-Israel economic and security partnership, and condemned antisemitism under the guise of anti-Israel hatred.

Mrs May heralded UK-Israel ties, stating: “We are proud of our pioneering role in the creation of the State of Israel. And today, our relationship is stronger than ever”.

Strongly condemning those who use anti-Israel hatred as a cover for antisemitism, Prime Minister May emphasised: “Criticising the actions of a particular Israeli government is never – and can never be – an excuse for questioning Israel’s right to exist”.

Mrs May thanked CFI for its support of the Conservative Party and CFI’s “important part in strengthening and sustaining” the friendship between the UK and Israel.





# RECORD UK-ISRAEL TRADE MARKED BY CFI TRADE DELEGATION

In June 2018, CFI coordinated its 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. The trip included visits to some of Israel's leading companies across a range of sectors, including high-tech, energy, cyber security, medical science, agritech and FinTech, as well as meetings with key politicians, officials, and leading businesspeople.

The Conservative parliamentarians also opened the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange on Tuesday 29th May.

In January 2019, following the CFI trip, the International Trade Secretary Rt. Hon. Dr Liam Fox MP and Israel's Economy Minister Eli Cohen announced that the UK and Israel had agreed one of the first post-Brexit free trade deals in principle.

Bilateral trade between the UK and Israel is at a record high, reaching £8.6 billion in 2018.

**“On this fantastic trip we have seen some really good examples of Israeli companies benefiting the United Kingdom and British citizens. We’ve seen cyber security firms that are inventing products that given Britain’s close security relationship with Israel will help keep Britain safe in a very dangerous world. We’ve seen FinTech companies that produce some of the technologies used by British citizens to do online banking, and we’ve seen a pharmaceutical company which delivers one in eight of the generic drugs used in the National Health Service”.**

**Former Chief Whip,  
Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP**

**“It’s an enormous pleasure to be out here to have a look at what this small but incredibly vibrant country has to offer. There is no doubt about it, this is a country with a huge amount of enthusiasm for technology, for cyber security, for a whole load of 21st Century industries, and it’s absolutely the case that Britain should be doing everything we can to engage commercially with Israel”.**

**Former International Trade Minister,  
Mark Garnier MP**



Conservative parliamentarians visit SodaStream factory



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# DELEGATIONS



CFI delegation at terror tunnel entrance



Delegates commemorate Yom Hashoah



Rt. Hon. Lord Trimble addresses delegates

## FEBRUARY 2018

CFI coordinated 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 southern Israel. Delegates received a strategic briefing from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) at the tunnel, which leads into an agricultural field in an Israeli kibbutz. The CFI delegation featured a full itinerary of political and security briefings, giving the group a first-hand look at the latest situation in Israel, as well as cultural and historical visits. Conservative MP for East Renfrewshire, Paul Masterton, viewed a United Hatzalah ambucycle equipped with medical supplies dedicated in memory of Yoni Jesner, who lived in the constituency and was 19 years old when he was killed in a suicide bombing on a bus in Israel on 19th September 2002.

## APRIL 2018

CFI led a delegation of five Conservative MPs to Israel and the West Bank, where Yom Hashoah, the Holocaust Remembrance Day, was commemorated at the state opening ceremony at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial. Speakers at the ceremony included Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Reuven Rivlin. CFI Vice-Chairman Andrew Percy MP said that the ceremony was "deeply moving", and described the remembrance sirens ringing out across the country at 10am as "an important reminder of why the State of Israel exists today". In the West Bank, delegates met chief PLO negotiator Saeb Erekat in Ramallah, and Palestinian polling expert Dr Khalil Shikaki who discussed the latest public opinion trends among Palestinians.

## JULY 2018

Five Conservative parliamentarians visited Israel with CFI for the annual International Institute for Strategic Leadership Dialogue, which brings together legislators, business leaders and opinion formers from across the political spectrum from the UK, Australia, and Israel. The group included Nobel Peace Prize winner Rt. Hon. Lord Trimble, and CFI Vice-Chairmen Andrew Percy MP and John Howell OBE MP. The dialogue consisted of discussions with Israeli parliamentarians and officials, meetings with local technology start-ups, and symposia on the future of the Middle East. Lord Trimble opened the conference in Jerusalem on behalf of the cross-party UK delegation, which included parliamentarians from Labour Friends of Israel.

# CFI IN PARLIAMENT

**CFI had another busy year in Parliament as we worked with many Conservative parliamentarians to campaign on key issues including Iran's nuclear activities and funding of terror groups; proscription of Hezbollah; Hamas's threat to Israel; and Palestinian Authority prisoner salaries.**

At least 65 Conservative MPs and Lords (excluding Ministers) spoke in support of Israel and in condemnation of antisemitism in 2018, with over 170 helpful contributions in various debates and question sessions.

This included; 17 MPs that condemned Iran's nuclear activities (May), 15 parliamentarians that supported Israel during Gaza border clashes (May), and 11 MPs that celebrated UK-Israel trade (July).



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# HRH THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE IN ISRAEL

The strength and warmth of the UK-Israel relationship was further reaffirmed when HRH The Duke of Cambridge, Prince William made his landmark visit to Israel. The trip marked the first ever official visit by a member of the Royal Family in the Jewish State's 70-year history.

From playing beach volleyball in Tel Aviv to testing Israel's latest high-tech innovations, the visit gave us many memorable images. 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".**



The Duke of Cambridge at the Western Wall, Jerusalem

## NOTABLE EVENTS



Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson addresses CFI Parliamentary Reception



CFI celebrates ennoblement of Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles



Home Secretary Sajid Javid addresses CFI Conservative Party Conference Reception

### JANUARY-APRIL 2018

CFI's 2018 began with CFI's Annual Parliamentary Reception in January, which was attended by over 250 supporters, including 50 parliamentarians, and addressed by Defence Secretary Rt. Hon. Gavin Williamson MP and Ambassador of Israel, H.E. Mark Regev. CFI hosted a briefing for Conservative MPs in Parliament with Israel's Science and Technology Minister Ofir Akunis. In March, CFI Parliamentary Chairman (Lords) Rt. Hon. Lord Pickles hailed the UK-USA-Israel trilateral relationship in an address to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's (AIPAC) Annual Policy Conference in Washington, D.C. CFI joined celebrations for Israel's 70th birthday in April, with 50 Conservative MPs and peers attending a lunch in Parliament hosted by CFI with the Ambassador of Israel. CFI also celebrated the occasion at CCHQ with a traditional Israeli lunch, joined by Conservative Party Chairman Rt. Hon. Brandon Lewis MP and CCHQ staff.

### MAY-AUGUST 2018

The CFI team and supporters held a number of successful Action Days for Conservative council candidates in the key London boroughs of Barnet, Westminster and Camden ahead of Local Elections. With the help of CFI activists in Barnet on election day, a ward was won by a single vote. 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, working closely alongside Rt. Hon. Stephen Crabb MP, our Parliamentary Chairman in the House of Commons. At the end of the summer, CFI published its new edition of Informed magazine. In her letter to Informed readers, Prime Minister Theresa May celebrated the UK-Israel relationship, emphasising that "the UK is proud to stand side by side with Israel as an ally with mutual interests, and a close friend with shared values".

### SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2018

CFI had another strong showing at Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham, with Home Secretary Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP addressing more than 500 Conservative parliamentarians, activists, and supporters at CFI's reception. A series of Secretaries of State and Government Ministers, as well as dozens of MPs, attended the reception. The event came at the end of another successful Conservative Party Conference for CFI, as we signed up as many as 150 new supporters at our exhibition stand – a record number. Throughout the autumn/winter period, CFI coordinated numerous briefings in Parliament for MPs and peers. CFI and LFI, in partnership with the Embassy of Israel, co-hosted a cross-party event in Parliament to commemorate the expulsion of Jewish communities from Arab countries. Conservative MPs and peers also discussed Israel's thriving high-tech industry at a lunch briefing hosted by OurCrowd, an Israel-based equity crowdfunding platform.



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