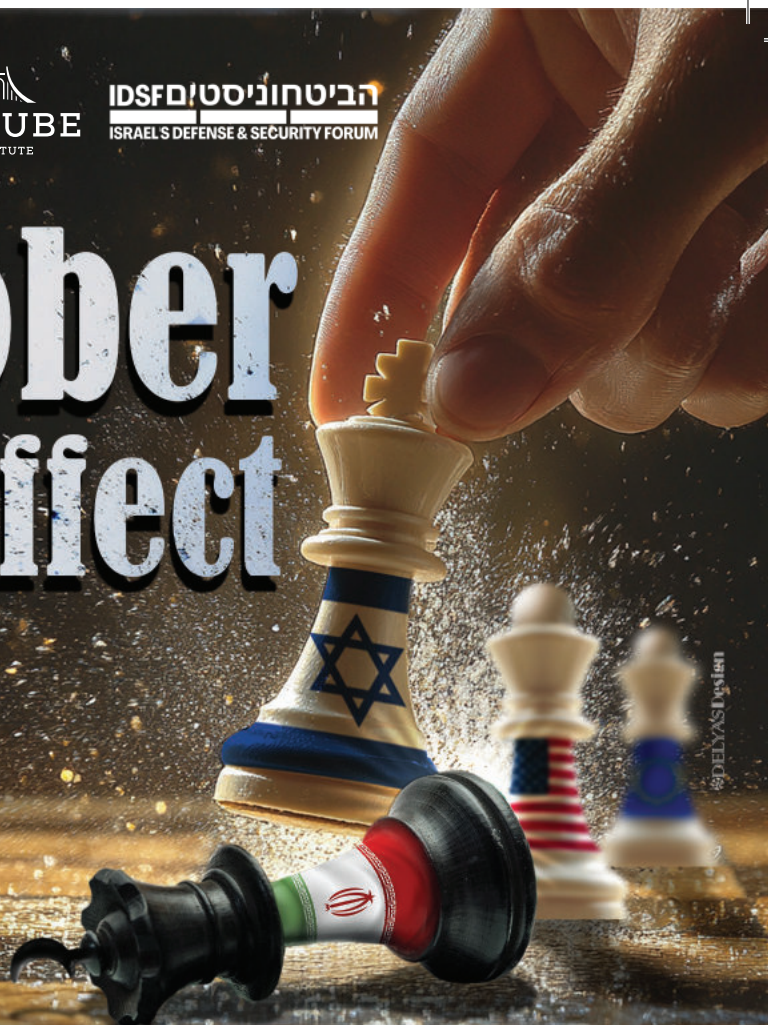


The October Effect


DANUBE
INSTITUTE

הביטחוניסטי/IDSF
ISRAEL'S DEFENSE & SECURITY FORUM



Strategic Implications for
Israel and Europe
in the Middle East War

Begin Heritage Center

Jerusalem, Israel

September 9, 2024

16:00-21:00



On October 7, the worst single act against the Jewish people since the Holocaust changed Israel forever and sent shockwaves all around the Middle East and the world. Approaching the one-year anniversary of the massacre, the war in Gaza, the campaign against Hezbollah, and more broadly Israel's existential struggle against the Iranian axis cannot only be treated as a regional conflict, as it swelled into a geostrategic issue. As the Israeli war cabinet is focusing on the day after in Gaza while trying to sequence its struggle against Hezbollah, an increasingly aligned Russian-Iranian-Chinese axis is redefining the security landscape of the region, while the U.S and European support for Israel's prosecution of the war in Gaza wavers. This strategic realignment happens against the backdrop of a coordinated lawfare waged against Israel through the hijacking of UN institutions and massive waves of antisemitism sweeping through the West, endangering the Jewish diaspora.

This conference sponsored by Israel Defence and Security Forum and the Budapest-based Danube Institute aims to address the multilayered issues stemming from the war in Gaza and the regional Israeli-Iranian campaign. Structured into three panels, the expert discussion will explore the strategic and operational dilemmas for the Jewish State posed by the creation of a Hamas-free Gaza while preparing for an all-out war with Hezbollah. The geostrategic implications of the emergent Russia-China-Iran axis will be addressed in a separate panel, finally, the conference will wrap up with a deep-dive into the waves of antisemitism engulfing the West.

PROGRAMME

09/09/2024

16:00 - 16:30 MEET & GREET

16:30 - 16:45 OPENING REMARKS

John O'Sullivan, President, Danube Institute

16:45 - 17:00 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Amichai Chikli, Minister for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism

17:00 - 17:45 PANEL 1: THE TIDAL WAVE OF ANTI-SEMITISM ENGULFING THE WEST

As landmarks in Europe and the U.S. were illuminated in the colors of the Israeli flag after the October massacre, Western European capitals were desecrated by anti-Semitic tribalistic chants, the vandalization of Jewish institutions and shameless rallies parading anti-Semitic symbols to celebrate the slaughter of innocent people. As the war in Gaza progressed and the Iranian disinformation machine switched gears, anti-Israeli sentiments devolved into anti-Semitic rage engulfing college campuses in Europe and in the U.S. Countering false narratives about the war in Gaza became even more challenging after countries in the global South found a new aptitude in waging lawfare against Israel by hijacking various U.N. bodies. How does the rising tide of anti-Semitism endanger the Jewish diaspora in the West? What can Western governments do to counter disinformation about Israel and stem the outpour of hatred?

Moderator: **Jamie Geller**, Aish Global

Fleur Hassan Nahoum, Israel Special Envoy for Trade & Innovation, outgoing Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem

László Bernát Veszprémy, Editor-in-Chief Corvinák, Historian

Jeff Ballabon, Senior Counsel for International and Government Affairs at the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ)

MP Michael Freilich, Belgium Chamber of Representatives, former Editor of Jewish Currents Magazine

17:45 - 18:00 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Brig. Gen. (Res.) Yossi Kuperwasser, Director of Research, IDSF

18:00 - 18:45 PANEL 2: A WAR ON TWO FRONTS? THE DAY AFTER IN GAZA AND THE HEZBOLLAH MENACE

As the one-year anniversary of the October 7 massacre approaches, political discourse around the war in Gaza has already shifted to the Day After and Israel's plan for a post-Hamas order. Once the terrorist organization's military and government infrastructure is completely dismantled, Israel will be faced with the gargantuan task of building a sufficient arrangement that ensures both Israel's security and a future for Gaza's residents.

What would be the steps in constructing this new order? How do you secure the proactive cooperation of moderate Arab states without infringing on Israel's myriad security implications? As the first stones are laid down in the edifice of the post-Hamas order in Gaza, the Hezbollah menace looms large in the North. Is it possible to avoid an all-out military confrontation with the most powerful Iranian proxy? How can Israel sequence the two conflicts and successfully impose its own timeline on its adversaries?

Moderator: Brig. Gen. (Res.) Yossi Kuperwasser, Director of Research, IDSF
Major General (Res.) Gershon Hacohen, IDSF-Habithonistim founding member
Yifa Segal, former Chief of Staff to Israeli Ambassador to the US, Managing Director of Hetz for Israel

Lieutenant Colonel (Res.) Sarit Zehavi, Chair of the ALMA Center for the research of the north

18:45 - 19:15 BREAK

19:15 - 19:20 VIDEO MESSAGE

Hon. Tony Abbott, *Former Prime Minister of Australia and Visiting Fellow at the Danube Institute*

19:20 - 19:35 ISRAEL'S STRATEGIC DILEMMA

Lieutenant Colonel (res.) Yaron Buskila, Executive Director, IDSF

19:35 - 19:45 KEYNOTE SPEECH

János Lastofka, Head of Department for Middle East and North Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

19:45 - 19:55 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Tomáš Zdechovský, Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)

19:55 - 20:40 PANEL 3: OCTOBER'S GLOBAL QUAKES. THE EMERGENT RUSSIA-CHINA-IRAN AXIS AND THE U.S.

The ironclad unity of the West in supporting Israel after the October massacre was short lived. As the IDF prosecuted the war in Gaza growing fissures and fractures emerged in the U.S., deepened by the Iranian disinformation machine. As the Biden administration's resolve waned and calls for a ceasefire increased, a new axis started to emerge between Iran, Russia and China. The military-economic cooperation between Russia and Iran that had surfaced after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine spilled over to the war in Gaza. Pursuing its own economic interests, China seems to slowly drift into alignment with this new axis, that *inter alia* is aiding them in sanctions evasion. What are the security implications for Israel of the emergent Chinese-Russian-Iranian axis? Will the U.S. be able to fracture this partnership? What could a new Trump administration mean for Israel? Is it still possible to build up an American-Israeli-Sunni alliance?

Moderator: **Kristóf Veres**, International Director, Danube Institute

Or Yissachar, Vice President, Research and Content, IDSF

Mónika Palotai, Senior Research Fellow, Religious Freedom Institute

Col. Richard Kemp, Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Robert C. Castel, Hungarian Israeli Expert on Security Policy, High Ranking Israeli Civilian Security Official

20:40 - 21:00 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Gilad Erdan, Outgoing Israeli UN Ambassador

ABOUT DANUBE INSTITUTE

The Danube Institute was established by the Batthyány Lajos Foundation in 2013 in Budapest, with the aim of encouraging the transmission of ideas and people within the countries of Central Europe and between Central Europe, other parts of Europe, and the English-speaking world. The Institute itself has been committed from its foundation to three philosophical loyalties: a respectful conservatism in cultural, religious, and social life, the broad classical liberal tradition in economics, and a realistic Atlanticism in national security policy. These ideals remain our lodestars.

More recently, we have added a fourth commitment: exploring and extending the related concepts of democracy and patriotism. We believe that the nation-state offers the only sure foundation for democracy, and that a tolerant civic nationalism the only basis for a successful democratic internationalism. Nation-states are the building blocks of internationalism. Both are to be distinguished from supra- or trans-nationalism which embody the ambition to transcend them but which have so far failed to match them in democratic accountability. Our methods of developing and transmitting these ideas are research, analysis, publication, debate, and scholarly exchanges. Our primary audience is the universe of centre-right intellectuals, political leaders, and public-spirited citizens. But we will also engage our counterparts on the democratic center-left in vigorous and principled public debate on as many occasions as possible and appropriate. We hope to draw upon the best minds of our day across national boundaries in international forums.

Debate itself is our fifth commitment. It is a vital catalyst in building a democratic society.

In line with these commitments we will:

- establish and support research groups and research projects to interpret

and advance current thinking within conservatism and democratic nationalism;

- encourage the exchange of scholars, political leaders, and cultural figures through international conferences and exchange fellowships here in Hungary;
- engage young people interested in science, scholarship, and political ideas and help them to enter and influence wider public debate;
- and in general encourage relevant discussions on matters of importance to Hungary on both a domestic and an international level.



ABOUT IDSF-HABITHONISTIM – ISRAEL'S DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORUM

IDSF-Habithonistim – Israel's Defense and Security Forum is a group of over 30,000 Israelis led by reserve officers and commanders from all branches of the Israeli defense establishment, who firmly believe that Israel's security must be anchored in its ability to protect itself, by itself.

The group couples the experience of many leading generals and commanders with its popular support, and combines being a grassroots movement with being a think tank and a leading association.

The group is dedicated to guiding the narrative of Israel's national security needs and ensuring that Israel's security in the homeland of the Jewish people is never taken for granted.

The authoritative voices of well-known military veterans, media personalities and national security experts, are key in disseminating our security strategy for the State of Israel.

Our movement welcomes all those who identify with our message and our founding principles, without prejudice to religion, race, gender or rank.

OUR MISSION

We are a Zionist, security-based movement, whose aim is to position Israel's security as the top national priority, in a manner which ensures the sovereignty of the Jewish people in their homeland for generations to come.

TEAM

The movement's management: Brigadier General (res.) Amir Avivi (chair and founder), Lieutenant Colonel (res.) Yaron Buskila (VP), Or Yissachar, Assaf Voll, Jessica Barazani, Ortal Ron, Moshe Davis, Elie Pieprz, Keren Balila, Ronit Farkash, Eva Nagar, Tal Nir, Yitshak Lev

The movement's board of directors: Major General (res.) Gershon Hacohen,

Major General (res.) Yitzhak Gerry Gershon, Commissioner (res.) Shlomo Katabi

Among the members of the movement: Major General (res.) Yossi Bachar, Major General (res.) Kamil Abu Rukun, Major General (res.) Yossi Mishlav, A., a former senior officer in the Mossad, M., a former senior officer in the General Security Services, former Commissioner Shlomo Katabi, Brigadier General (res.) Hasson Hasson, Brigadier General (res.) Harel Knafo, Brigadier General (res.) Avigdor Kahalani, Brigadier General (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser, Colonel (res.) Tal Braun, Prof. Alexander Bleigh

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SPEAKERS



JOHN O'SULLIVAN

PRESIDENT, DANUBE INSTITUTE

Mr. O'Sullivan is President and founder of the Danube Institute in Budapest, international editor of *Quadrant Magazine* in Sydney, Australia; associate editor of the *Hungarian Review*; a fellow of the *National Review* Institute and editor at large of *National Review*. He is a co-founder and director of Twenty-First Century Initiatives as well as the International Reagan Thatcher Society.

He served as a Special Adviser and speechwriter to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. He was the founder and co-chairman of the New Atlantic Initiative, launched at the Congress of Prague in May 1996 by President Vaclav Havel and Lady Thatcher. It played a major role in bringing the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into NATO.

His book, "*The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister*," on the roles played by Pope John Paul II, President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher in the collapse of communism and the revival of Western market democracies, has been published in English, Portuguese, Spanish, Czech, Polish, Italian, and Hungarian ■



BRIG. GEN. (RES.) YOSHI KUPERWASSER

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, IDSF-
HABITHONISTIM

Brigadier General (Res.) Yossi Kuperwasser is the former head of the Research Division at the Israel Defense Forces' Intelligence Corps, as well as the former Director General of the Ministry of Strategic Affairs. During his military service, he served among other positions as the Central Command's Intelligence Officer and as the Intelligence Attaché to the United States. He also participated in the Yom Kippur War and the First Lebanon War. Since his release from service, he has published multiple articles covering intelligence and military affairs. Yossi was among the founders of Havatazlot, the Intelligence Corps' flagship program.

Married to Zionit Patael-Kuperwasser, released as Lieutenant General after having served as an intelligence officer as well, as well as at the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories unit.

Academic qualifications:

M.A. in Economics, B.A in Arabic Language and Literature ■





MAJOR GENERAL (RES) GERSHON HACHOEN

IDSF-HABITHONISTIM FOUNDING
MEMBER

Former commander of the Northern Corps and former Commander of the Military Colleges, Gershon is a reserve officer with the rank of Major General who has served in a variety of senior positions in the IDF, including Commander of the 36th Armored Division, Commander of the Military Colleges, Commander of the Northern Corps, Commander of the Division Commanders Course and Commander of the General Staff Corps. He is the author of many publications, including What's National About National Security, The New Existential War, and Area C: Israel's Eastern Line of Defense ■



FLEUR HASSAN NAHOUM

ISRAEL SPECIAL ENVOY FOR TRADE &
INNOVATION, OUTGOING DEPUTY MAYOR
OF JERUSALEM

Fleur Hassan-Nahoum serves as the outgoing deputy mayor of Jerusalem in charge of foreign relations, international economic development, and tourism. She is a cofounder of the UAE-Israel Business Council, an association of Emirati and Israeli business and government leaders fostering bilateral trade, innovation, and cooperation. Fleur was born in London, grew up in Gibraltar, and immigrated to Israel in 2001. In 2023 she was appointed by Israel's foreign minister Eli Cohen as special envoy for Trade & Innovation ■



OR YISSACHAR

VP CONTENT AND RESEARCH, IDSF-
HABITHONISTIM

Or Yissachar is a national security researcher and team lead in the Israeli high-tech industry, leading the IDSF-Habithonistim's Content Division and Research Department. Or has served in the Intelligence Corps' elite 8200 unit and speaks 5 languages, including French and Persian.

Or's research focuses on Iran, the Palestinian front, and on Israel's security strategy. Furthermore, he researches defense and security doctrines in the West as it relates to the Middle East.

Or makes regular media appearances, lectures, and podcasts on security, regularly publishes articles and op-eds, and is quoted in major publications in Israel and around the world.

Or believes in integrating divine and earthly, and on top of his research work and high-tech career he is a concert pianist and a composer.

Academic qualifications: MA, the International Security Program from the Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA), Sciences Po

BA, Piano Performance and Musicology, the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music, Tel Aviv University ■





ROBERT C. CASTEL

HUNGARIAN ISRAELI EXPERT ON SECURITY
POLICY, HIGH RANKING ISRAELI CIVILIAN
SECURITY OFFICIAL

Robert C. Castel is a former research fellow at the Israel Democracy Institute with research interests in asymmetric warfare, geopolitics, and military innovation. Between 1990 and 2009, he worked in various positions for Israel's Security Forces. Since 2009, Castel has been a high-ranking civilian security official. He is also a reserve crisis negotiator for Israel's National Counter-Terrorist Unit.

In 2012, he received his doctorate at the University of Haifa and conducted postdoctoral research in a joint project of the Israel Democracy Institute and the RAND Corporation. He authored the award-winning study *The Cyberterrorist's Manual for the Internet* (1996, IICC). His first book, *When Innovation Failed* was published in 2017. He is one of the most well-known experts on the Russian-Ukrainian war in Hungary. His Hungarian-language book titled *Függőleges Koporsó* ("Vertical Coffin") was published in 2022.

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ADV. YIFA SEGAL

FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF TO ISRAELI
AMBASSADOR TO THE US, MANAGING
DIRECTOR OF HETZ FOR ISRAEL

Adv. Yifa Segal is the Managing Director of Hetz for Israel, an NGO dedicated to creating a global ecosystem, fight antisemitism and advocate for Israel. Segal is also the International Director of UK Lawyers for Israel, a voluntary organisation of lawyers who support Israel using their legal skills.

Adv. Yifa Segal was the Chief of Staff of the Ambassador of Israel to the United States.

In 2015 Segal established the International Legal Forum (ILF) and was Chair and CEO of the organization until leaving for Washington DC. The ILF is a nonprofit organization fighting against terror, antisemitism, and the de-legitimization of Israel and the Jewish people.

In 2013-2014, Segal was the Joint Director of (TPS), an Israeli news agency disseminating news reports and footage in real-time from Israel to media outlets across the world. Before 2013, Mrs. Segal was a Shurat Hadin – Israel Law Center's legal team member.

Ms. Segal has a BA in Law from the University of Haifa and an MA in International Relations from Tel Aviv University ■





YARON BUSKILA

CEO, IDSF-HABITHONISTIM

Lt. Col. Yaron Buskila is a reserve IDF commander. He served as deputy brigade commander, battalion commander and commander of the Southern Command infantry training base. Yaron served as a special operations officer in the Central Command' Judea and Samaria Brigade and was responsible for many classified operations.

The President of Israel awarded the unit that Yaron commanded a special merit certificate in recognition of all of its work and extraordinary achievements in the war against terrorism ■



KRISTÓF VERES

INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR,
DANUBE INSTITUTE

Kristóf György Veres holds a PhD in history from Eötvös Loránd University. Earlier he was a researcher at the Budapest-based Migration Research Institute. Starting in September 2021, he worked for 14 months for the Center for Immigration Studies in Washington D.C. as an Andrassy National Security Fellow. He joined the team of the Danube Institute as a senior researcher in July 2023. He was put in charge of international relations in February 2024, the same time he joined the Center for the National Interest as a visiting research fellow. During his career he has given conference presentations in English, French, and Hungarian, his writings have been published in The National Interest, Newsweek, The Washington Examiner, Think Global Health, The Jewish News Syndicate and Providence Magazine. His research focuses on irregular migration, Ukrainian refugees in Europe, and Russian disinformation in the CEE region ■



COL. RICHARD KEMP

COMMANDER OF THE ORDER OF THE
BRITISH EMPIRE

Richard Kemp CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) served in the Army for 29 years. During his final period of military duty, he was head of the international terrorism and Iraq team for the Joint Intelligence Committee from 2002-2006, and was also Chairman of the COBRA Intelligence Group. In both of these roles he handled all major global terrorist attacks, including those against British interests. He was made CBE for his work on the July 2005 London bombings.

Based in Kabul, he was Commander of British forces in Afghanistan in 2003. He fought in the first Gulf War in 1991 and spent much time in Baghdad, Mosul and Fallujah with US forces and the CIA in 2004-05. He commanded an armoured infantry company with the United Nations Protection Force in Bosnia in 1994, and was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Bravery. He was counter-terrorism adviser to the government of Macedonia in 2001-2002. He commanded his battalion in Londonderry from 1998-2000, the last of his eight tours of duty in Northern Ireland. He was made MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) for intelligence work in the province ■



MÓNICA PALOTAI

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW,
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INSTITUTE

Mónica Palotai is a Senior Research Fellow at the Religious Freedom Institute, at the Institute for World Politics (IWP) in Washington DC, and a non-resident expert at the Warsaw Institute in Poland. Her primary focus is Russia and the CEE region, with a broader scope encompassing the emerging axis of Russia, China, and Iran. Previously, she was a Visiting Research Fellow at the Hudson Institute at the Center for Religious Freedom and the Center for American Common Culture. She holds a B.A. degree in Communication and Media from the Budapest Business School, Hungary, a J.D. at the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, Hungary, Sharia Law (LL.M.) at the University of Sharjah, and an M.A. degree in International Public Service at the University of Public Service, Hungary. Subsequently, she continued her studies at the Ph.D. program of the Doctoral School of Public Administration Sciences as a Hungarian state scholarship holder. She is scheduled to defend her thesis in 2024 autumn on regulatory challenges of private military and security companies. Her expertise extends to geopolitics, E.U. law, international law, and energy security. In addition, she has written extensively on the war in Ukraine, drawing from her multiple visits to the country since the full-scale invasion. Her work has been published in Newsweek, Real Clear Defence, Real Clear Religion, Providence, The Spectator, The National Interest, Washington Examiner, The Epoch Times, and The American Conservative, among others. Despite her demanding professional commitments, Mónica is a devoted mother of two, Benjamin (20) and Noel (14). She is an accomplished equestrian who competed in both showjumping and endurance ■



LÁSZLÓ BERNÁT VESZPRÉMY

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF CORVINÁK, HISTORIAN

László Bernát Veszprémy graduated from the Károli Gáspár Reformed University in 2016 with a degree in History and a Master's degree in Holocaust and Genocide Studies from the University of Amsterdam. He is currently a doctoral candidate at the Doctoral School of Cultural History at ELTE. He was a journalist at the Jewish journal Szombat from 2016 to 2018, a research fellow at the Veritas Institute for Historical Research from 2017 to 2018, and a research fellow at the Hungarian Institute of Jewish History at Milton Friedman University in 2019. From 2018 to 2021, he was a researcher at the Migration Research Institute, and from 2019 to 2021 he was deputy editor-in-chief of the Jewish news portal neokohn.hu. He is currently editor-in-chief of corvinak.hu and a publicist for Mandiner.

To date, he has published four books, Bureaus of Annihilation on the History of the Hungarian Holocaust published by Jaffa, 1921 on the Early History of the Horthy Regime published by MCC Press, Migration and Anti-Semitism in the West published by MCC Press, and an online reader on the history of Zionism ■





GILAD ERDAN

OUTGOING ISRAELI UN AMBASSADOR

Ambassador Gilad Erdan currently serves in the dual role of Israel's Ambassador to the United States and the United Nations. He presented his credentials to the UN in August 2020 and became Ambassador to the US in January 2021. Prior to his appointment, Erdan served as a Member of Knesset from 2003 to 2020 and in several ministerial positions. From 2015-2020, Erdan was Israel's Minister of Strategic Affairs, where he coordinated the government's strategy against the Palestinian-led efforts to delegitimize and boycott the State of Israel. Under his leadership, the Ministry conducted and published research proving the anti-Semitic nature and terrorist connections of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign against Israel. These efforts resulted in numerous international leaders publically rejecting this campaign of hate.

As Minister of Public Security from 2015-2020, Erdan ensured the safety and security of the citizens of Israel during the difficult period of "lone-wolf terrorist" attacks. His innovative approach included preempting attacks by preventing online radicalization and using advanced technologies to identify attackers before they execute their attacks. This included, inter alia, positioning advanced cameras and increasing police presence in sensitive areas, and fighting incitement online by pressuring social media companies to remove content on their sites that calls for violence. He also reformed Israel's communications sector and championed environmental issues, earning accolades like the "Green Globe" award. Erdan, who has a law degree from Bar-Ilan University and a Master's in Political Science from Tel Aviv University, has served in advisory roles and has a background in law and public service. Born in Ashkelon, he comes from an Orthodox Jewish background, is married, and has four children ■



LIEUTENANT COLONEL (RES.) SARIT ZEHAVI

Lieutenant Colonel (Res.) Sarit Zehavi is the founder and president of Alma – a nonprofit and an independent research and education center specialized in Israel's security challenges on its northern border. Sarit has briefed hundreds of groups and forums, ranging from US Senators, Congressmen/women and politicians to senior journalists and visiting VIP groups in Israel and overseas. Sarit scripts numerous position papers and updates focusing on Lebanon, Syria and Israel's national security challenges. She served for 15 years in the Israeli Defense Forces, specializing in Military Intelligence. Sarit holds an M.A. in Middle East Studies from Ben-Gurion University. Her unique achievements led her to be selected by the Jerusalem Post as one of the Top 50 Most Influential Global Jewish personalities of 2021.

Sarit, her husband Yaron, and their children live in the Western Galilee ■



JEFF BALLABON

**SENIOR COUNSEL FOR INTERNATIONAL AND
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AT THE AMERICAN
CENTER FOR LAW AND JUSTICE (ACLJ)**

Jeff Ballabon is Senior Counsel for International and Government Affairs at the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ). Jeff also leads the ACLJ's Israel operations from our Jerusalem office. A graduate of Yale Law School and former Senior Vice President of CBS News, Ballabon served as Republican Counsel to the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee and Legislative Counsel to Sen. John Danforth (MO). His clients have included the Coordinating Council on Jerusalem and numerous American victims of Palestinian terror whom he represented before the White House, State Department, Justice Department, and Congress. At Israel's Ministry of Justice, Ballabon worked on the legal status of the disputed territories as well as the first formulation of Israel's Basic Law on Human Dignity and Liberty ■



HON. TONY ABBOTT

**FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA
AND VISITING FELLOW AT THE DANUBE
INSTITUTE**

Tony Abbott was elected prime minister by the Australian people on September 7, 2013, and served for two years. In that time, the carbon tax and mining tax were repealed; free trade agreements were finalised with China, Japan and Korea; the people smuggling trade from Indonesia to Australia was halted; Australia became the second largest military contributor to the US-led campaign against Islamic State in Iraq; the biggest federally-supported infrastructure program in Australian history commenced; and, as PM, he chaired the G20 meeting of global leaders in Brisbane in November 2014. In 2014, and again in 2015, he spent a week running the government from a remote indigenous community. He served as the member for Warringah in the Australian parliament between 1994 and 2019. As the local MP, he was instrumental in the creation of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust to preserve the natural and built heritage of his electorate and elsewhere. Prior to entering parliament, he was a journalist with The Australian, a senior adviser to opposition leader John Hewson, and director of Australians for Constitutional Monarchy. He has degrees in economics and law from Sydney University and in politics and philosophy from Oxford which he attended as a Rhodes Scholar. He is the author of three books: The Minimal Monarchy (1995), How to Win the Constitutional War (1997), and Battlelines (2009). Between 1998 and 2019, he convened the Pollie Pedal annual bike ride which raised nearly \$7 million for organisations such as Soldier On, Carers Australia and other charities. He still surfs near Queenscliff and volunteers with the Davidson Rural Fire Brigade. In 2020 he was appointed as a Companion of the Order of Australia, and in 2022 he was awarded the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun. Currently, he is a director of the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation, serves on the council of the Australian War Memorial, is an adviser the UK Board of Trade, is a visiting fellow of the Institute of Public Affairs and the Danube Institute and is on the board of Fox Corp. He's patron to several charities, including Soldier On. He is married to Margaret and they have three daughters: Louise, Frances and Bridget ■



THE HONORABLE MICHAEL FREILICH

BELGIUM CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES,
FORMER EDITOR OF JEWISH CURRENTS
MAGAZINE

Michael Freilich is a prominent social and political figure in Belgium. He was the editor-in-chief of the Belgian Jewish News from 2007 to 2019 and remains an important spokesperson for the Jewish Community. Since 2019 he serves as a member of the Belgian Federal House of Representatives (Parliament) where he was elected for the centre-right N-VA faction, the largest political party in Belgium. As MP, Mr. Freilich covers the domains of Cybersecurity, Telecom, Banking and Trade in the Economics and Digitization commission in Parliament. He is dedicated to combating anti-Semitism and advancing tolerance and annually hosts the anniversary of the Abraham Accords each September. Freilich initiated several significant Parliamentary actions, including legislation to outlaw terrorist groups in Europe, ensure banking access for all, enhance cyber resilience, boost e-commerce, and protect minors from harmful online content, among other achievements. In June 2024, he was elected to a second 5-year term in office ■



JÁNOS LASTOFKA

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT FOR MIDDLE EAST
AND NORTH AFRICA, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS AND TRADE

János Lastofka is the Director for Middle East and North Africa in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary. Following graduation from Corvinus University of Budapest, he worked with NGOs active in the field of human rights before joining the foreign service 15 years ago. He has been posted to various positions in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, serving five years in Israel as the Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Hungary ■



AMICHAÏ CHIKLI

MINISTER FOR DIASPORA AFFAIRS AND COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

Amichai Chikli is the Minister for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism in the Government of Israel since December 2022. Before entering politics, he was a Combat Officer in the IDF, an educator and a social entrepreneur.

Chikli was born in Jerusalem in 1981. He served in the IDF as an Officer in the Golani Brigade and the Egoz Unit. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Security and Middle East Studies from the University of Haifa and a Master's Degree in Security and Diplomacy Studies from the Tel Aviv University.

In 2010, Chikli founded the Tavor Pre-Military Preparatory School (Mechina) in Nof HaGalil, many of whose graduates have enlisted in elite units in the IDF and were integrated into command roles. In 2013, he established the "Keshet" Program intended for high school students, with the aim of deepening the acquaintance and knowledge of the Land of Israel of Israeli youths, creating familiarity between them and Israeli society, and developing their leadership skills. A year later, in cooperation with the Ministry of Defense, he began preparing "olim" to Israel and volunteers from abroad for IDF service.

Chikli entered politics in 2021, and was first elected to in the 24th Knesset elections as part of the "Yamina" Party. In the 25th Knesset elections he ran as part of the Likud Party.

Amichai Chikli is married to Hadas, a School Psychologist in Nahalal, and they have three children. He is a member of Kibbutz Hannaton, where he resides ■



JAMIE GELLER

CHIEF MEDIA & MARKETING OFFICER
AT AISH GLOBAL

As the first Chief Media & Marketing Officer of Aish, Jamie Geller brings years of experience in building her media empire that influences millions every day. An award-winning producer and marketing executive for HBO and CNN, Jamie went on to successfully build a portfolio of Jewish food and lifestyle digital media brands as the Founder and CEO of Kosher Network international (KNi), the #1 Global Kosher Food Media Company and World's Most Watched Jewish Food Network with an audience of 5 million and 1 billion views. An eight-time bestselling author who appears regularly on the daytime talk show circuit, Ms. Geller has been featured in The New York Times, Forbes, Cosmopolitan, The Wall Street Journal, and many more media outlets. She has joined the Aish executive team to spearhead a digital media strategy featuring entertainment, edutainment, and educational experiences to make Jewish wisdom more accessible and engaging for people across the globe ■





MEP TOMÁŠ ZDECHOVSKÝ

GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN PEOPLE'S PARTY
(CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS)

Tomáš Zdechovský is a Czech politician, soldier, crisis manager, media analyst, poet, and author. He holds degrees from the University of South Bohemia, Masaryk University, and the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome. Zdechovský was elected to the European Parliament in 2014, representing the Christian Democratic Party, and was re-elected in 2019 and 2024. He has served on committees for Civil Liberties, Employment, and the Internal Market, and currently serves as the Fraction Coordinator in the Committee on Budgetary Control. In 2004, he founded a PR and communications company and has published various works of prose and poetry. Zdechovský is an active advocate for mental health, co-authoring the Parliament's call for the right to disconnect. He is also a staunch supporter of the rule of law, actively involved in combating money laundering and terrorist financing. Additionally, Zdechovský holds the rank of First Lieutenant in the Active Reserves of the Czech Army and has served multiple tours defending the Czech border ■

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