

The Diplomatic Club



Februar 2009



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Dear Friends,

This 2008 year is now approaching its end. Despite the rapid end of the purely military phase of the Palestinian Conflict, the conflict is still raging, claiming too many lives. We wish the Middle-East an active 2009 year focused on peace and development, where hatred dissolves and harmony blooms.

To our readers, as always we would like to offer our best wishes for 2009 may your * health be obvious (and need no discussion) * may your family relations be warm * may your friends be loyal* may your enemies become * your friends (and those who don't, get lost) * may your spam be filtered * may your Emails be answered * may your papers get published * may your wisdom deserve the approval of Confucius, and your folly the praise of Erasmus * may your power get shared, your wealth be free from greed and your poverty from envy * may we communicate fruitfully across culture * sso that our horizons widen and reason replaces violence.

The Diplomatic Club Magazine is Israel's fast growing media magazine and media platform. As events in the Middle East continue to hold center stage and the world's attention, the Magazine provides further and additional real-time English-language coverage and supplements, with accurate in-depth, top-notch quality and quantity than any other Israel-based media.

The Diplomatic Club Magazine requests the pleasure to publish opinions, discussions and articles written by Ambassadors. We are looking forward to develop this idea.

The Diplomatic Club and myself wish you all a successful New Year.

Yours sincerely,
Julia Verdel
General Manager
And the Editorial Team

Gelukkige nuwe jaar

Gezuar Vitin e Ri

Kul 'am wa antum bikhair

Sbeta Brikhta

Shuvo Nabo Barsbo

Bloavezh Mat

"Chestita Nova Godina"

FELIANT NOU

Xin Nian Kuai Le

Pace e Salute

Sretna Nova godina!

Stastny Novy rok

Godt Nyt

GELUKKIG NIEUWJAAR!

MELKAM ADDISAMETYIHUNELIWO!

Onnellista Uutta Vuotta

Bonne Annee

Bo Nadal e Feliz Aninovo

Prosit Neujabr

GILOTSAVTAKHAL TSELS!

Kenourios Chronos

L'Shannab Tovab

Naye Varsba Ki Shubbkamanyen

(Cantonese) Sun Leen Fai Lok

Boldog Ooy Ayvet

Selamat Tabun Baru

Sal -e- no mobarak

Sanab Jadidah

Bliain nua fe mbaise dbuit

Felice anno nuovo

Akimashite Omedetto Gozaimasu

Saehae Bock Mani ba deu sei yo!

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Laimingu Naujuju Metu

Srekjna Nova Godina

Tratry ny taona

Is-Sena t- Tajba

Godt Nytt

Masaganang Bayung Banua

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THE DIPLOMATIC CLUB MAGAZINE 3



"THE RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL ARE A MATTER OF PRIDE IN TURKEY"

NAMIK TAN, THE AMBASSADOR OF TURKEY IN ISRAEL TO DC By Ksenia Svetlova



Shimon Peres and Ambassador Namik Tan

During the everlasting weeks of the "Cast Lead" operation in Gaza Strip thousands of Israelis who were glued to their TV sets followed with anxiety the developments in Turkey, usually the vacation spot of the choice. During almost sixty years of perfectly good relations Israel became accustomed to the friendship with Turkish republic, built on solid base of common values and goals, trade and military cooperation. Naturally, the angry anti-war demonstrations in Istanbul and Ankara that were followed by anti-Israelis and sometimes even anti-Semitic slogans, the scandalous expulsion of Israeli basketball team during the match in Ankara and the harsh statements of prime-minister Erdogan on Israeli policy came as a shock to many Israelis. Some became to question the future relations between the two countries, others argued that the current fase is nothing that an insignificant dark cloud that will fade away soon. His Excellency Namik Tan, the Ambassador of Turkey to Israel agreed to talk to the Diplomatic Club about the fascinating history and the nature of relations between the two countries, to set the record straight. It's important to mention that the DC wasn't able to address the questions on most recent events, yet

together with the ambassador we did our utmost to draw the most precise portrait of the current state d'affairs. His Excellency Namik Tan was appointed to be the Ambassador of Turkey two years ago. He was born in Mardin, Turkey and studied law in

university of Ankara. Mr. Namik Tan is an experienced diplomat who has travelled around the globe – from Moscow to Abu Dhabi and from Washington to Tel-Aviv. Mr. Tan is married and has two children.

K.S. Mr. Ambassador, this year Turkey and Israel will celebrate 60 years of establishing the diplomatical relations. How can you sum up this period of time in the history of the two countries?

N.T. First of all, let me remind you, that historically the relations between the Turks and the Jews begun long before the emergence of modern states – modern Israel and modern Turkey. If we go back to the 15-th century, we'll see that Turks saved Jews during the dark times of the Spanish inquisition. The greatest influx of Jews into Asia Minor and the Ottoman Empire occurred during the reign of sultan Mehmed's successor, Beyazid II (1481-1512), after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal. The sultan issued a formal invitation to Jews who were cruelly persecuted in these countries and they started arriving in the empire in great numbers. (The sul-



Shimon Peres and Ambassador Namik Tan and Ehud Barak

tan is said to have exclaimed thus at the Spanish monarch's lack of wisdom: "Ye call Ferdinand a wise king he who makes his land poor and ours rich! K.S.).

Also, during the Holocaust the history repeated itself. Turkey - a neutral country during the World War II - used its status to help the Jewish refugees. Turkish diplomats served as a bridge between the refugees and institutions that wanted to help them. Moreover, Turkey, the only remaining route for Jews in Europe to flee to Palestine, refused to close off its straits to refugees in transit. Once arrived in Istanbul, Jewish refugees could pass into Palestine if they had visas. Those who did not have visas were put in small boats in the resort towns of Marmaris and Bodrum and sent to Palestine illegally. About 100,000 Jewish refugees fled from Europe to Palestine via Turkey by the end of the war. About 75,000 of them were saved by Turks. (Turkish diplomats in France provided official documents such as citizenship cards and passports to thousands of Jews and in this way they saved their lives. K.S.). Then, when the state of Israel was created, Turkey immediately recognized the new-born state and consequently became the first Muslim state to do so. Since that time the ties between Israel and Turkey constantly continue to grow closely, since our two countries share more than mere geographic. The only two democracies in the Middle East, Turkey and Israel have shared values, visions and goals. Our ties are very strong, they extend to every possible field - military cooperation, extensive trade, tourism, culture and political activity.

K.S. Could you elaborate more on the economic bilateral relations?

N.T. Indeed, the figures are quite astonishing. During 2007 the trade be-



tween the two countries summed up in almost 3 billion USD (2.7 - K.S.) There is a free trade agreement between Israel and Turkey, good relations and favorable business climate- currently over 250 Israeli companies operate inside Turkey, who are involved in investing, building, import and export. Stef Wertheimer went as far as establishing an industrial park in a zone just outside Istanbul. As for Israeli tourism to Turkey, it constantly hits new records. The number of Israelis who entered the country between January-October 2008 stood at 514,000, compared to 511,000 in all of 2007. We were very pleased to discover that Turkey is the most common destination for aircraft departures. (Tourists from Israel make up 2.49% of all tourists to the country - K.S.).

K.S. Do you believe that this trend will also continue this year?

N.T. I know for a fact that many other countries in the region that envy our relations with Israel and the volume of incoming Israeli tourism to Turkey would like to

diminish our success, so they spread rumors and try to intensify some occasions. But the fact is that the relations between our two countries are strong. We, Turks, value these relations and we are very proud of them. Last year president Shimon Peres gave a speech in our parliament in Ankara- this is very rare for Turkey, we usually do not allow this privilege to foreign heads of states, but Shimon Peres, whom we respect a great deal, became one of the very few who spoke in our Parliament. I can also mention frequent visits and meetings of Israeli and Turkish officials of the highest level - during 2008 president Shimon Peres, prime minister Ehud Olmert, the parliament speaker Dalia Yitzik and many other officials have visited Turkey. Another interesting detail of our relations - in the whole Middle Eastern region, Israel was the only country to give back to Turkey its historical real estate property. I'm talking of course, about the "Saray" - the house of the governor located in Jaffa port. The ceremony of handover will take place during the future visit of prime-minister Erdogan to Israel.



Dalia Yitzik, Shimon Peres and Ambassador Namik Tan



Ambassador Namik Tan and Turkish Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul

PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL SPOKESPERSON'S OFFICE

AT JANUARY 21, 2009 PRESIDENT PERES RECEIVED THE CREDENTIALS OF NEW AMBASSADORS FROM SLOVAKIA, INDIA, CROATIA, AND UZBEKISTAN

President Shimon Peres received the credentials of new Ambassadors from Slovakia, India, Croatia, and Uzbekistan in an official ceremony at the President's Residence. President Peres discussed with the ambassadors the strengthening of cooperation between Israel and their countries in the fields of politics, commerce, agriculture, technology, and tourism, and told the ambassadors that the President's Residence is open to them and prepared to work for the advancement of said cooperation.

The Slovakian Ambassador, His Excellency Dr. Ivo Hlavacek, told President Peres that it was his sixth visit in Israel, and added that Slovakia values the Israeli people, their traditions, and their cuisine, and that he was interested in broadening cooperation particularly in the high-tech sector. He further assured that Israel can always depend on the friendship of Slovakia.

President Peres told the Indian Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Navtej Singh Sarna, that, "Our two countries are dealing with the threat of global terror, and we have a shared interest in fighting against it." The two agreed that there is room for cooperation on security matters, with particular emphasis on the development of technology and means for fighting the war against terror.

The Croatian Ambassador, Her Excellency Ms. Marica Matokovic, brought President Peres an official invitation to visit in her country sometime during 2009 as the guest of the President of Croatia, Stjepan Mesic, and updated the President on Croatia's accession to the European Union.

The Ambassador of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Mr. Oybek Es-honov, recalled the Jewish history of Uzbekistan and Uzbek efforts to save Jews during the Holocaust. President Peres replied that, "The good relations between Israel and Uzbekistan, 77% of which is Muslim, can serve as a model for good relations between the Jewish world and the Christian and Muslim worlds."



VALENTINE'S DAY CHARITY PARTY

BY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB ISRAEL FOR TABLE TO TABLE

The International Women's Club Israel held a Valentine's Day Charity Party for the Table to Table organization on Saturday evening, February 14, Valentine's Day in Herzliya Pituach. The dress theme was Red and Black, and there was a performance by the Angels Band, Supernatural Entertainer Lior Suchard, as well as a lottery (first prize being a flight to Paris), other games, gambling and a dance contest. All of the proceeds were for the benefit of Table to Table, a six-year-old organization that feeds the needy in communities all around the country. The organization is headed by Joseph Gitler, Executive Director, who also spoke at the Party. The organization is based in Raanana and has 53 workers, 6 trucks and 2 warehouses. There was an attendance of around 300 at the Valentine's Day Party, with many luminaries and dignitaries, including the Ambassadors of Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Guatemala and Japan. Also in attendance was the Consul General of the United States Embassy and the Defense Attache from the Embassy of Ivory Coast. A splendid Valentine's Day evening was had by all for an extremely worthy cause.



Suzette Reyna, President International Women's Club Israel and Husband



Ambassador of Austria Michael Rendi and Wife



Ambassador of Japan Harubisa Takeuchi



Ambassador of Canada Jon Allen and Joseph Gitler, Executive Director Table to Table



Defense Attache Col. Kosehassa Gnaoua, Ivory Coast and Wife



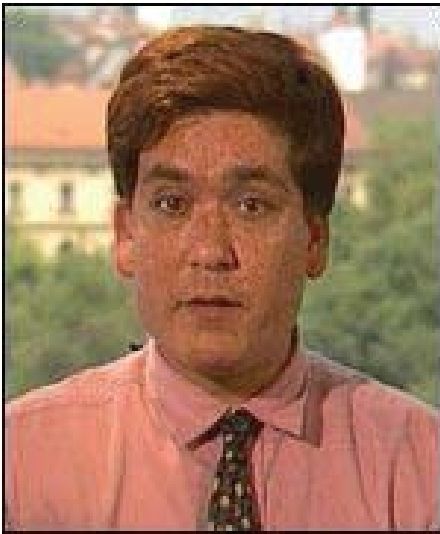
Lior Suchard, Supernatural Entertainer and Suzette Reyna



Ambassador of Finland Per-Mikael Engberg and Wife

THE UNEASY RELATIONSHIP - UNRWA AND ISRAEL

By Ksenia Svetlova



This year UNRWA (short for United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) will celebrate its 60-th anniversary. Created by the UN after the 1948 war between the Arab countries and Israel, it provides education, healthcare, social services and emergency aid to over 4.6 million refugees living in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. UNRWA is by far the largest UN operation in the Middle East, with over 29,000 staff - teachers, doctors, nurses or social workers. Initially, UNRWA was meant to be a temporary agency - until the problem of Palestinian refugees will be resolved, but during the six decades it evolved into one of the key players in middle east political arena - strongly supported by those who support the plight of Palestinian refugees, and fiercely criticized by those, who deny any responsibility of Israeli state for there gruesome situation. During all these years the relations between Israel and UNRWA were never easy - many Israeli officials blame the organization for being biased and claimed that it acts as a barrier to peace, perpetuating the Palestinian problem, rather than solving it. At the same time, UNRWA officials complained that Israeli closures, curfews and checkpoints in the West Bank and Gaza have interfered with its ability to carry out its humanitarian mandate. The tension between the two sides has mounted in the years of the second Palestinian intifada,

when Israeli security forces blamed the organization for employing and sheltering terrorists in its institutions in Gaza. During the recent Israeli military operation "Cast Lead", however, the relations reached the lowest point ever. Two UNRWA schools, in Gaza and Jabalia came under Israel's air force attack. In one of the schools where hundreds of Palestinians took refuge 43 people died as a result of bombing. Israeli authorities claimed that HAMAS militants opened fire from schoolyard and that many of those who were killed, were terrorists. The heads of UNRWA said there was no evidence for militants inside the school and demanded to have impartial investigation of the incident. But no matter what will be the findings of future investigation, many Israelis believe that there is a direct link between UNRWA and terrorist activity. Christopher Gunness, the spokesperson of the organization, believes it's about time to clarify some facts about UNRWA.

Gunness, who during the 3 weeks of military operation in Gaza appeared in every possible media outlet, knows his way around journalists. Probably, since he used to be one himself, working for the BBC. In 2006 he joined UNRWA, working for the political office and in June 2007 became the spokesperson for the organization.

During these three years UNRWA has handled two wars which affected the population of Palestinian refugees - the war in Lebanon and the recent military operation in Gaza.

K.S. Not the easiest three years in terms of your work, were they?

C.G. No. We have been working all these time in emergency regime and it's really a shame, to concentrate on emergency work and relief while our major contribution for the peace is educating kids and making people healthy. We see our human development as highly important, perhaps our most important mission.

K.S. How many kids do you have enrolled in UNRWA schools in Gaza, for example?

C.G. We has now more then 200 000 kids in more then 200 schools. It's amazing that very soon after the ceasefire all of



them went back to schools, during the first weekend of the ceasefire.

K.S. According to some reports from Gaza, the number of children who are being enrolled to UNRWA schools is constantly on the rise. What is the reason for that?

C.G. Well, first of all, the number of refugees in Gaza is increasing - there are more children, therefore there are more students. Another reason is that many parents had realized that we provide the secular, non-political option for education, while the other option for education in the Gaza strip is the PA - i.e. the HAMAS. In our schools we teach human rights, we have women who teach boys. In our summer camps we offer kids beach activities, theatre and so on. So while in 2007 we had 190 000 kids in our camps, in 2008 there were already 220 000.

K.S. You mentioned that UNRWA provides a non-political, secular option for education, while Israeli press is oversaturated with reports that UNRWA employs terrorists and promotes extremism in its schools...

C.G. I have to say, that there is a lot of mythology around this issue. In fact, we have zero tolerance to militants and militant activity in our schools. As soon as we discover any such cases, we investigate them thoroughly and dismiss these people. Often, we also undertake disciplinary measures towards their superiors. We are prepared to investigate every case, but blanket allegations are simply not accepted. Many times in the past we asked the Israeli offi-

cials who suggested that we employ militants for more details or information, but we never got an answer.

K.S. This matter is being discussed by various parties in Israel for years now and it became especially acute during the operation "Cast lead" when Said Siam, the ex-minister of interior in Gaza, was targeted. For many years he has been employed as a teacher in UNRWA school. Many people in Israel wonder whether he was the only one?

C.G. Without a doubt, many people in Gaza voted HAMAS and supported it. If someone votes HAMAS, is he a terrorist? When we employ people, we don't ask them what they voted, and I believe that no one should ask. What we do not allow, is any militant activity in our schools as well as the presence of militants.

K.S. And yet, by now you are probably know by heart all the reports in Israeli media that concerned the attacks on UNRWA schools in Gaza. The IDF spokesmen claim until this very moment that there was militant activity spotted in the schoolyard.

C.G. I would like you to know, that while the IDF spokesmen said there were militants in the school, during our working meetings Israeli military officials told us that they knew for a fact that no such a thing happened. I'm not saying that there were direct lies, but there was definitely disinformation of the public and that the credibility of these people is now in trash. I would like to stress the fact that UNRWA is in charge of what is going on inside our facilities, but we can't be responsible what is going on the streets. We do not police the streets of Gaza and we can't be responsible for that. The Israeli army knew the GPS coordinates of our schools, and it knew that few hundreds of civilians were taking refuge in the schools. Let me put it this way: if the soldiers didn't do anything, why the army ordered for their names and faces to be covered now? I believe that there should be an impartial investigation of these tragic incidents.

K.S. Do you, as UNRWA, intend to investigate the death of your employees during these attacks?

C.G. We have all the evidence, as we were inside the schools, we have eye witness reports. Soon we will make all this evidence public and whoever is interested to investigate will be able to use it.

K.S. Many Israelis believe that for 60 years now UNRWA perpetuates the refugee question instead of helping to find a solution. What do you feel when you hear such accusations?

C.G. I can only say that if some people think that if UNRWA went away, the refugees will be put on the buses and sent to the third countries – it simply won't happen. Indeed, we were created as a temporary agency, until the political solution will be found. So the question on the perpetuation of the problem should be addressed at those responsible for finding this solution. Also, if UNRWA went away, all it would mean, is that Israel would have instead to supply the refugees with education and health care. Unfortunately, as I said before, there is a lot of mythology going on. One of the popular myths suggests that only the Palestinians inherit the status of a refugee. Factually it is not true, since also the Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the children of the refugees in Burma inherit this status as well until there is a political solution for them. I believe that in fact what Israel needs is not weakening UNRWA but the other way around – make it stronger. It seems to me that every side will benefit from this position. Does Israel really needs 1.5 millions of impoverished, starving people on its borders? Everyone knows, that the only ones who thrive on the despair – are extremists...



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ISRAELI PARTIES:

BACKGROUND AND PLATFORMS



Balad (Hebrew: בל"ד, an acronym for Brit Le'umit Demokratit (Hebrew: ברית לאומית דמוקרטית, lit. National Democratic Assembly); Arabic: التجمع الوطني الديمقراطي, al-Tajamu' al-Watani al-Dimūqrati or بلد, lit. Hometown) is an Israeli Arab political party in Israel led by Jamal Zahalka. It is sometimes called the "National Democratic Alliance".

Balad is an Arab nationalist political party, whose stated purpose is the 'struggle to transform the State of Israel into a democracy for all its citizens, irrespective of national or ethnic identity. Balad also demands that the state of Israel recognize Palestini-

an Arabs as a national minority, entitled to all rights that come with that status including autonomy in education, culture and media. The party supports creation of two states based on pre-1967 borders, with the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem to constitute a Palestinian state and the implementation of UN Resolution 194 regarding the right of return to Palestinian refugees.

Balad describes itself as a 'democratic progressive national party for the Palestinian citizens of Israel.' Since its creation, it has objected to every proposed state budget submitted on the grounds that it discriminates against the Arab population



Shas - (Hebrew) ש. Acronym for Shisha Sidrei Mishna - The standard book of six parts of the Mishna together with Talmudic commentaries that is supposed to be a feature of every Jewish home

2- The Israeli ultraorthodox (Haredi) party under the spiritual leadership of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. This party appeals particularly to poor Jews of "Eastern" (Sephardic) origin. The name is supposedly an acronym for "Shomrei Torah Sephardim" Observ-

ant Sepharadim - and is a play on the Shas acronym.

Shas's popularity is due to several factors:

1- Astute political positioning and adroit maneuvering, particularly by former political whip Arieh Deri. Deri's political career came

to an end however, when he was convicted of bribery. Deri and his supporters insisted that he was the victim of ethnic prejudice against Sephardic Jews. After serving several years in prison, Deri was commanded by the party and rabbinical authorities to restrict himself to Torah studies.

2- Shas positioned itself as the voice of the more or less disenfranchised residents of development towns, and of Jews of Moroccan origin in particular.

3- Unscrupulous election practices that include distributing amulets against the evil eye and rabbinical blessings in return for promises to vote for Shas, and apparently, voting by deceased persons. In several Shas districts in 1999, over 100% of those registered participated in the elections.

4- A well-oiled political machine that can get the voters out on election day.

4- A network of charitable and educational institutions, including nurseries and other schools supported by government funds as well as private contributions.



The National Religious Party (Hebrew: מפלגת דתית לאומית, Miflaga Datit Leumit, commonly known in Israel by its Hebrew acronym Mafdal, (Hebrew: מפד"ל)) is a political party in Israel representing the religious Zionist movement. Formed in 1956, it is the second oldest surviving party in the country after Agudat Israel, and was part of every government coalition until 1992.

Traditionally a practical centrist party, in recent years it has drifted to the right, becoming increasingly associated with Israeli settlers, and is currently part of a political alliance with the strongly right-wing National Union. The 2006 elections saw the party slump to just three seats, the worst electoral performance in its history. In November 2008 party members voted to disband the party in order to join the new Jewish Home party created by a merger of the NRP

and most of the National Union factions. However, most of the National Union left the merger shortly after its implementation. The National Religious Party (NRP) was created by the merger of two parties - Mizrahi and Hapoel HaMizrachi - in 1956. The two parties had run for the 1955 election on a joint list under the name of the National Religious Front. The founders of the party were Yosef Burg and Haim-Moshe Shapira (both from Hapoel HaMizrachi), who focused its activity mainly on the status of Judaism within the framework of Israeli society. Throughout the NRP's existence it has attempted to preserve the relevance of Judaism on issues such as Israeli personal status laws, education, culture, and municipal issues such as prohibitions on the selling of non-Kosher food (in prescribed areas, and occasionally throughout a given municipality), prohibiting transportation and public activities on the Shabbat.

The NRP has operated a trade union (under the same name as the old workers' party, Hapoel HaMizrachi), a newspaper (HaTzofe) and a youth-movement (Bnei Akiva). The newspaper and the youth movement still exist today, in sharp contrast to other party newspapers such as Davar or Al HaMishmar that lost their respective parties' backings and eventually shut down.



Gil (Hebrew: גיל, lit. Age, but also an acronym for Gimla'ey Yisrael LaKnesset (Hebrew: גימלאי ישראל לנסות), lit. Pensioners of Israel to the Knesset) is a political party in Israel and part of the governing coalition in the seventeenth Knesset.

The party has been in existence in some form since the 1990s. It ran in the 1996 elections under the name Pensioners of Israel (Hebrew: גימלאי ישראל, Gimla'ey Israel), led by former Labour MK Nava Arad

and including modern-day Gil MK Moshe Sharoni on its list. However, the party failed to cross the electoral threshold and did not win a seat. It did not contest the 1999 or January 2003 elections, though an unrelated party, Power for Pensioners did run in the 1999 elections, failing to win a seat

As a result of the coalition talks with Kadima, Gil agreed to become a division of the Kadima party in return for the Health ministry and the newly created Ministry of Pensioners Affairs. Party leader Rafi Eitan became Minister of Pensioners Affairs, whilst Yaakov Ben-Yezri became Health Minister. Ben-Yezri, a confessed smoker, later caused controversy when he lit up whilst being interviewed on television.

On 2 July 2008 three MKs (Moshe Sharoni, Elhanan Glazer and Sarah Marom-Shalev) left the party to establish the Justice for the Elderly faction. The new faction merged back into Gil on 27 October 2008, though Elhanan Glazer established another new faction, The Right Way instead of rejoining Gil.

The Green Movement - Meimad is a social-environmental movement that brings together activists, organizers, city council members, parliament members, academics, thinkers, and scientists who share awareness that the social-environmental agenda must be central to Israel's political discourse.

The Meimad Movement was founded in 1988 (5748) by Rabbi Yehuda Amital along with a group of Orthodox and traditional Israelis. The Green Movement, a more recent political initiative has been gathering momentum for only a year.

The Green Movement - Meimad is committed to concrete policies and measures that will improve quality of life in Israel. Among the key elements in its platform and commitments for action once elected are:

- Reduction of air pollution by 50% during the next four years through a program of improved enforcement, tougher standards and technical assistance to industry.
- An agenda that would promote Jewish identity through education instead of coercive legislation. The present status quo on issues of marriage, Sabbath, burial that are characterized by religious coercion needs to be modified to ensure religious freedom
- Recognizing the steady 6% rise in Israel's energy demand as unsustainable, the party calls for an immediate public conservation policy to reduce energy consumption by 25% along with an accelerated move to establish renewable energy sources, cancelling the planned Ashkelon coal-fired plant.
- The present allocation of 15% in the Transport Ministry's infrastructure budget for public transportation is woefully inadequate and needs to be increased to 50%.
- Some 50 nature reserves have been proposed since 1982 but have never been officially declared due to petty local political haggling.
- Conditions for Israel's teachers remain intolerable manifested in reduced pupil performance by Israeli school children.
- Quantitative objectives for reducing poverty in Israel will be set with specific programs in the area of training and employment established to address the growing gap between "haves" and "have-nots" in the country.
- The party accepts a formula of "two states" for "two nations" as a basis for resolving the conflict with the Palestinians, but at the same time demands a commitment to strong security guarantees for Israel as part of any final agreement.





Kadima (Hebrew: קדימה, lit. Forward) is a political party in Israel. It became the largest party in the Knesset after the 2006 elections, winning 29 of the 120 seats.

Israel's media reported that Kadima released the main points of its national agenda on November 28, 2005 as presented by Justice Minister Tzipi Livni in a drafted statement

The Israeli nation has a national and historic right to the whole of

Israel. However, in order to maintain a Jewish majority, part of the Land of Israel must be given up to maintain a Jewish and democratic state.

Israel shall remain a Jewish state and homeland. Jewish majority in Israel will be preserved by territorial concessions to Palestinians.

Jerusalem and large settlement blocks in the West Bank will be kept under Israeli control.

The Israeli national agenda to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and achieve two states for two nations will be the road map. It will be carried out in stages: dismantling terror organizations, collecting firearms, implementing security reforms in the Palestinian Authority, and preventing incitement. At the end of the process, a demilitarized Palestinian state devoid of terror will be established.

Israel's political system will be modified to ensure stability. One possibility to achieve this goal would be to hold primary, regional and personal elections to the Knesset and the Prime Minister's office.

Kadima would not rule out a future coalition partnership with any Israeli political party or person.

promoting equality for minorities

negative income tax and national pension

increasing social security benefits and national health insurance

civil marriage

reform of police



Ahdut HaAvoda (Hebrew: אחדות העבודה, lit. Labour Unity) was a political party in Israel and is one of the ancestors of the modern-day Israeli Labor Party.

The original Ahdut HaAvoda party was founded in Ottoman Palestine before World War I and was headed by David Ben-Gurion. In 1930 it merged with the avowedly anti-socialist Hapoel Hatzair to form Mapai, and effectively disappeared.

The party was resurrected in 1944

after a split from Mapai. In 1948 it united with Mapam and fought the 1949 and 1951 elections as part of the party.

However, during the second Knesset Moshe Aram, Yisrael Bar-Yehuda, Yitzhak Ben-Aharon and Aharon Zisling broke away from Mapam under the name Ahdut HaAvoda - Poale Zion. However, they were not recognised by the speaker of the Knesset as an independent party.

The 1955 elections were fought as Ahdut HaAvoda and the party

managed to win 10 seats, making them the fifth largest in the Knesset. They formed part of both of Ben-Gurion's governing coalitions during the third Knesset. Party member Nahum Nir was appointed Knesset speaker (the only time a speaker has not been a member of the ruling party), Bar-Yehuda was made Minister of Internal Affairs, and Moshe Carmel became Minister of Transportation. However, they party were ultimately responsible for bringing down the government in 1959 when they and fellow coalition partners Mapam voted against the government on the issue of selling arms to West Germany and refused to leave the coalition.

In the 1959 elections the party was reduced to seven seats. They again joined the coalition government until its collapse in 1961, with Ben-Aharon becoming Minister of Transportation. The 1961 elections saw them gain one seat, and become part of all three coalition governments of the fifth Knesset with Yigal Allon becoming Minister of Labour and Ben-Aharon, Bar-Yehuda and Carmel all acting as Minister of Transportation during the session.

For the 1965 elections, the party allied with Mapai to form the Labor Alignment, which won 45 seats. On 23 January 1968 the party merged with Mapai and Rafi to form the Israeli Labor Party and ceased to exist as an individual entity



Likud (Hebrew: ליכוד, lit. Consolidation) is the major centre-right political party in Israel. Founded in 1973 as an alliance of several right-wing and liberal parties, Likud's victory in the 1977 elections was a major turning point in the country's political history, marking the first time the left had lost power.

However, after ruling the country for most of the 1980s, the party has won only one Knesset election since 1992, though its candi-

date, Binyamin Netanyahu, did win the popular vote for Prime Minister in 1996. After a big win in the 2003 elections, a major split in 2005 saw Likud leader Ariel Sharon leave to form the new Kadima party, with Likud slumping to fourth place in elections the following year. A member is called a Likudnik (Hebrew: ליקודניק) and the party now leads the opposition in the Knesset.

The Likud supports free market capitalism and liberalism, though in practice it has mostly adopted moderate economic policies. The Likud, under the guidance of Finance minister Binyamin Netanyahu, pushed through legislation reducing value added tax (VAT), income and corporate taxes significantly, as well as customs duty. Likewise, it has instituted free-trade (especially with the European Union and the U.S.) and dismantled certain monopolies (Bezeq and the sea ports). Additionally, it has managed to privatize numerous government owned companies (El Al and Bank Leumi). The last Likud Finance minister, now the party leader, Binyamin Netanyahu, was the most ardent free-market Israeli Finance minister to-date, argues that Israel's largest labor union, the Histadrut, has so much power as to be capable of paralyzing the Israeli economy. He also claims that the main causes of unemployment are laziness and excessive benefits to the unemployed."

Likud has in the past espoused hawkish policies towards the Palestinians, including opposition to Palestinian statehood and support of the Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Most current Likud members support the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and oppose Arab statehood and the disengagement from Gaza.



The National Union (Hebrew: האיחוד הלאומי, *HaIhud HaLeumi*) is a right wing political party in Israel and in the present Knesset consists of an alliance of Ahi, Moledet and Tkuma. In the 2006 elections the party ran on a joint list with the National Religious Party, winning nine seats. For the coming elections, the 'National Union' will be running separately and will be made up of the parties Moledet, HaTikva, Eretz

Yisrael Shelanu/Our Land of Israel and some of Tkuma who split. Ahi have joined the Likud whilst the remainder of Tkuma have merged into the National Religious Party who will now be named 'Bayit Yehudi/Jewish Home'.

The party has a joint platform, and in particular it supports the settlement

of all the Land of Israel, advocates the use of more military power in the War on terror and harsher measures against Palestinian terrorism. It rejects all current Oslo-based peace efforts — which it sees as dangerous to Israel — and the notion of what it calls a "22nd Arab state". The party instead advocates voluntary transfer of the Arabs from the West Bank, though it has been vague as to how this could be implemented.

Despite the joint platform, the three constituents retain their unique identity on a rhetorical level:

Ahi represents the National-Ultra-Orthodox (Hardal) faction of the Torah-religious public in Israel. They put focus on supporting the settlements, fighting terrorism and corruption and reestablishing the high-status of Torah Zionism.

Moledet focuses on the notion of transfer and more generally national security issues. It prides itself on being composed equally of non-Orthodox and Orthodox elements, although its members are sympathetic to NRP views.

Tkuma represents the Orthodox side. While not actively opposing the Israel Beytenu dominated platform, it uses Torah motives and argumentation to advance the union's common ground.



Yisrael Beiteinu (Hebrew: ישראל ביתנו, lit. Israel is Our Home) is a political party in Israel. It takes a hard line towards Arab citizens of Israel and other Palestinians. Its main platform involves reducing the amount of Arab citizens by redrawing the borders with a future Palestinian state, in conjunction with efforts to increase Jewish immigration. Yisrael Beiteinu received 11 seats in the Knesset in the 2006 elections.

The party advocates increasing punishments for all forms of crimes, and improving the status of the policeman. The party's head, Avigdor Lieberman, asked to join Ehud Olmert's government (31st) as Internal Security Minister, but was prevented from taking the post due to an ongoing police investigation against him.

Yisrael Beiteinu proposes to solve the economic crisis by carrying out massive infrastructure projects in order to ease unemployment, giving aid to small businesses, building new factories in the Negev and Galilee, etc. MK Lia Shemtov is especially known for advocating the rights of the working class, lower middle class, and the poor. Shemtov claims to have played a central role in cancelling the Israeli welfare-to-work plan ("Wisconsin Plan"), along with the rest of the par



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**Are you looking at the sea and wishing you were there?
Does the sea remind you of other far away places?**

Via Maris sailing club is proud to announce the opening of the first English speaking sailing course. We invite you to come on Sunday the 8th of February 10:30 to an introduction to your new hobby. Cold beer on the pier, the yacht is ready and so are we to explain about the skippers' course and the ASA license that you will get.

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DAN DAVID PRIZE WINNERS

The Dan David Prize was founded in 2001 by **Mr. Dan David**, President of Fomat Ltd., Dedem Automatica Srl, and Photo-Me International Plc.

The Dan David Prize is a joint international enterprise endowed by the Dan David Foundation and headquartered at Tel Aviv University. Prof. Zvi Galil, President of Tel Aviv University, serves as Chairman of the Dan David Prize Board.

The Dan David Prize annually awards **three prizes of US\$1 million each** for achievements that have an outstanding scientific, technological, cultural or social impact on our world. Each year fields are chosen within the **three Time Dimensions – Past,**

Present and Future, which enables the Dan David Prize to be connected with the evolving spheres of human knowledge. Each year the laureates are chosen from these fields.

The Dan David Prize seeks to impact on the next generation of leaders and involves high school students through the “Name Your Hero” Essay Competition. Students submit their ideas for candidates and fields for the Dan David Prize. Selected students participate in an advanced writing workshop at Tel Aviv University. Three first prizes of NIS10,000 (US\$2,700) and six second prizes of NIS 5,000 (US\$ 1,350) are awarded. The Board of Directors takes the suggestions presented in the winning essays into consideration when selecting the fields for the coming year.

2009 Laureates for the Past Time Dimension in the field of – Astrophysics – History of the Universe

**Paolo De Bernardis (University La Sapienza in Rome, Italy), Andrew Lange (Caltech, USA)
and Paul Richards (UC Berkeley, USA)**



Paolo De Bernardis

Paolo De Bernardis is Professor of Physics at the University La Sapienza in Rome, Italy. His fields of expertise are Experimental Astrophysics and Cosmology, in particular the study of cosmic microwave background.

Prof. De Bernardis was a member of the second, fourteenth and eighteenth dispatch of the National Program for Research in Antarctica and in the OASIS and the BOOMERANG programs. He was the Principal Investigator of the Italian international experiment BOOMERANG stratospheric balloon. During the 1998 Antarctic flight BOOMERANG measured, for the first time, the fluctuations of the primordial plasma and demonstrated the ‘lack of curvature’ of the universe, so estimating ‘the density’ of total mass and energy.

These findings, to which the journal Nature devoted its front page, had great exposure in the press nationally and internationally. In 2003, BOOMERANG/B2K was launched again to measure the state of polarization of the radiation background microwave. The results were published in 2005.

Prof. De Bernardis’ awards include the Balzan Prize for Observational Astronomy and Astrophysics and the Premio Feltrinelli of the Accademia dei Lincei.



Paul Richards

Paul Richards is Professor Emeritus at the Department of Physics, University of California at Berkeley. Prof. Richards is known for the discovery of the large-scale spatial geometry of the universe being spatially flat, and confirmation of the existence of a negative-pressure dark energy pervading the universe (as first suggested by supernova observations). Prof. Richards provided evidence for an inflationary epoch at the beginning of the universe, and measurements of the Universe’s mean density, matter density, and other cosmological parameters.

More specifically, Professor Richards organized and lead the MAXIMA-1 experiment (parallel to Paolo De Bernardis and Andrew Lange’s BOOMERANG experiment). MAXIMA-1 measured the angular sizes and amplitudes of the first few acoustic peaks in the cosmic microwave background radiation, from which Richards and colleagues deduced the Universe’s geometry and made their byproduct discoveries.



Andrew Lange

Andrew E. Lange is Goldberger Professor of Physics at California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California. Prof. Lange is known for the discovery of the large-scale spatial geometry of the universe being spatially flat, of its total mass-energy density having a “critical” value and for major byproducts of this discovery. He confirmed the existence of a negative-pressure dark energy pervading the universe; provided evidence for an inflationary epoch at the beginning of the universe, and measured the Universe’s mean density, matter density and other cosmological parameters.

Together with Paolo De Bernardis, (and parallel with Paul Richards’ MAXIMA-1 experiment) Professor Lange led the BOOMERanG experiment which measured the angular sizes and amplitudes of the first few acoustic peaks in the cosmic microwave background radiation. These results led Lange and colleagues to deduct the Universe’s geometry and to make their byproduct discoveries.

The publication of the BOOMERanG and MAXIMA data in 2000 provided the first undisputed evidence that the Universe has a flat geometry. Additional analysis of the data implied that ordinary matter makes a small fraction of the cosmic mass density (5% at the present time). These results have been confirmed subsequently and carry important implications for fundamental physics. The nature of most of the cosmic matter (known as “dark matter”) is actively being explored, and the flat geometry of the Universe is believed to have originated from an early epoch of inflation, during which space curvature was erased by a prolonged period of vast expansion.

Prof. Lange also developed (with James Bock) the spiderweb bolometers that made BOOMERanG’s and MAXIMA-1’s measurements possible, and that underlie other major cosmological and astronomical projects and instruments.

2009 Laureate for the Present Time Dimension in the field of Leadership



Anthony C. L. Blair (London, England)

Anthony Charles Lynton Blair, former British Prime Minister, is one of the most outstanding statesmen of our era. From the time he assumed leadership of the British Labor Party in 1994 until he stepped down as prime minister in 2007, he showed exceptional intelligence and foresight, and demonstrated moral courage and leadership. Tony Blair has consistently asked the important questions and thought deeply about the interconnected world of the 21st century.

Having led a demoralized and struggling party to power in 1997, Blair exercised a pragmatic approach, strong conviction and personal charisma to help usher in a period of remarkable economic and cultural growth. He helped broker an agreement between Unionists and Republicans in Northern Ireland; he engineered, against all odds, the policy that resolved the crisis in Kosovo, and he was one of the architects of transforming Britain’s position in the EEC. It was the Kosovo crisis in particular that transformed Tony Blair into an international leader on the basis of his steadfast determination and morally courageous leadership.

Upon stepping down as Prime Minister, Blair was appointed as the Middle East Quartet Representative. As envoy for the United Nations, the European Union, Russia and the United States, his goal is to undertake to give effect to what is now the consensus across the international community – namely, that the only way to bring stability and peace to the Middle East is through a two-state solution.

2009 Laureate for the Future Time Dimension in the Field of Global Public Health



Robert C. Gallo (University of Maryland, USA)

Robert C. Gallo, MD, is the Director, Institute of Human Virology, University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute, Baltimore, Maryland.

Robert Gallo’s medical research career has involved two long stints, the first at the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health, USA; and the second as the Director of the Institute of Human Virology at the University of Maryland Medical School in Baltimore, Maryland, USA.

From the outset of his career, Gallo sought to establish the importance of retroviruses in human disease. He has been multiply honored for three signal achievements, all contributing to improving global public health. The first is the discovery and identification of interleukin-2, a critical factor required for the growth and maintenance in culture of human T lymphocytes (being the host cells for the human immunodeficiency virus - HIV). The ability to propagate these lymphocytes in culture enables to grow large amounts of HIV in many hundreds of laboratories around the world, making a critically important contribution to the understanding of the virus, its variations, its epidemiology and its immunology.

The second achievement is his contribution to the understanding of human T cell leukemia viruses HTLV1 and HTLV2. His penetrating analyses of these viruses, originally discovered in Japan, have cemented retroviruses as a cause of human cancer.

Gallo’s third achievement and his most important contribution, of huge significance to global public health, is his role in the development of a robust, simple blood test for the human immunodeficiency virus. The blood test rapidly became a worldwide tool thus securing the safety of the blood supply, and not less important, helping to identify many persons who carried HIV while apparently healthy. This naturally led to public health measures to minimize the risk of passing HIV to sexual partners. Indeed it is impossible to envision the epidemiology of this huge pandemic without the blood test. Its public health importance cannot be overestimated.



are rooted in a similar ancient custom. Long ago, people in China lit bamboo stalks, believing that the crackling flames would frighten evil spirits.

THE LANTERN FESTIVAL

In China, the New Year is a time of family reunion. Family members gather at each other's homes for visits and shared meals, most significantly a feast on New Year's Eve. In the United States, however, many early Chinese immigrants arrived without their families, and found a sense of community through neighborhood associations instead. Today, many Chinese-American neighborhood associations host banquets and other New Year events.

The lantern festival is held on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month. Some of the lanterns may be works of art, painted with birds, animals, flowers, zodiac signs, and scenes from legend and history. People hang glowing lanterns in temples, and carry lanterns to an evening parade under the light of the full moon.



CHINESE NEW YEAR

THE YEAR OF THE OX

Chinese New Year is the longest and most important celebration in the Chinese calendar. The Chinese year 4707 begins on Jan. 26, 2009.

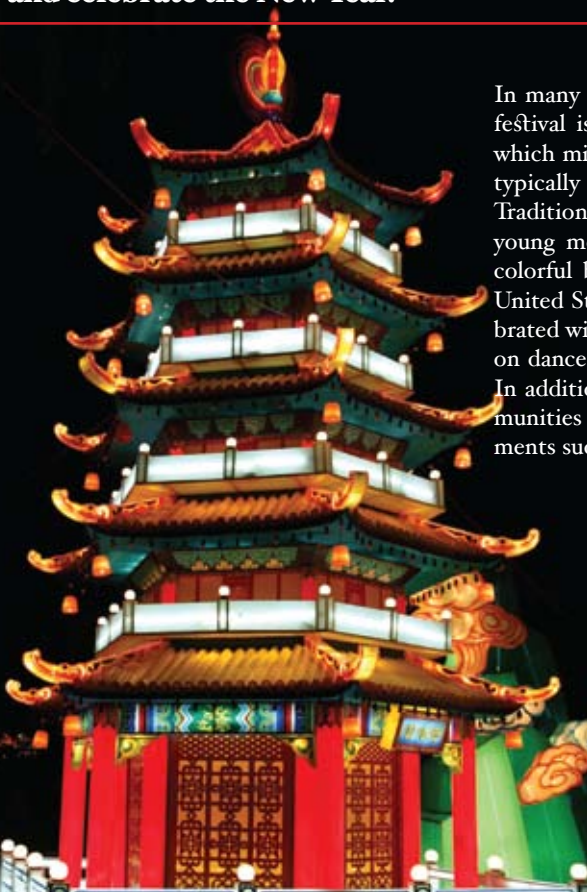
Chinese months are reckoned by the lunar calendar, with each month beginning on the darkest day. New Year festivities traditionally start on the first day of the month and continue until the fifteenth, when the moon is brightest. In China, people may take weeks of holiday from work to prepare for and celebrate the New Year.

AN OBSTINATE YEAR

Legend has it that in ancient times, Buddha asked all the animals to meet him on Chinese New Year. Twelve came, and Buddha named a year after each one. He announced that the people born in each animal's year would have some of that animal's personality. Those born in ox years tend to be painters, engineers, and architects. They are stable, fearless, obstinate, hard-working and friendly. Jack Nicholson, Jane Fonda, Walt Disney, and Anthony Hopkins were all born in the year of the ox.

FIREWORKS AND FAMILY FEASTS

At Chinese New Year celebrations people wear red clothes, decorate with poems on red paper, and give children "lucky money" in red envelopes. Red symbolizes fire, which according to legend can drive away bad luck. The fireworks that shower the festivities



In many areas the highlight of the lantern festival is the dragon dance. The dragon—which might stretch a hundred feet long—is typically made of silk, paper, and bamboo. Traditionally the dragon is held aloft by young men who dance as they guide the colorful beast through the streets. In the United States, where the New Year is celebrated with a shortened schedule, the dragon dance always takes place on a weekend. In addition, many Chinese-American communities have added American parade elements such as marching bands and floats.

THE HOUSE OF BEAUTY AND AESTHETICS



'Pretty Woman' studio offers to its clients a wide range of aesthetic treatments from head to toe with the use of advanced technologies, with special emphasis and attention paid to the client's wishes and needs. Nowadays everybody knows that 'Pretty Woman' it is the secret of beauty.

Have you visited 'Pretty Woman', the house of beauty and aesthetics in Herzliya Pituah?

This high-class beauty studio is the oldest one in Herzliya; it is providing its exclusive services for 10 years since it opened. Designed with praiseworthy taste, it has transformed into a shrine for those women (and men!) looking for uncompromising innovations and professionalism. And, yes, not a few men have discovered 'Pretty Woman' too, as it promises an ideal treatment to everyone, at any age and by use of all the wide range of aesthetic means.

Various beauty care services are provided by 'Pretty Woman' including laser hair removal with the most advanced equipment, different levels of peeling, LPG cellulite reduction and elimination treatment, special facial treatments for those suffering from acne, anti-aging treatment, oxygen care, brow design according to the face shape, suntanning, mouth aesthetics, teeth whitening, permanent makeup made with paints containing only natural minerals (by the way, this treatment is safe, it gives amazing results; it is recommended to repeat it in a couple of years), and, of course, manicure and pedicure.

In other words, after a series of treatments in 'Pretty Woman' you will go out almost 'new'...

'PROFESSIONALISM' IS THE KEY WORD AT 'PRETTY WOMAN'

Morning hours at 'Pretty Woman' are full of bustle and activity. Clients are coming, and still the feeling of intimacy and privacy is preserved in 8 beauty treatment rooms. The energetic General Director, Rinat Zaydman - Barkan, shortly explains the secret of success before sending the clients to experience the opportunities provided by the place.

"In my opinion, the key word here is 'professionalism'", says the Director. We don't settle for the achieved results but introduce all the existing innovations. In our treatment, we are committed to the 'custom made service' approach, when we see a client in front of us we are always attentive to her/his needs.

THE HOUSE ADVICE

"Awareness of the importance of care has to be an integral part of one's life style from young age. It is important to keep the skin clean, use moisturizing cream and not to forget sunscreen cream. All this, together with healthy food and regular physical activity will bring not only short-term but also long-term benefits. "But, besides all this, we should always remember that

beauty is natural, so it is important not to exaggerate with what we are doing."

JUST BEFORE THE SUMMER, WHAT ABOUT THE HAIR REMOVAL?

But, sure enough, the subject that occupies women the most is laser hair removal. Rinat Zaydman-Barkan explains: "Laser hair removal with the state-of-the-art equipment is the best among existing solutions nowadays for all ages. The system treats hair roots by use of the light energy absorbed by the hair follicles. It gives the best results for the long-term period, and most of the hair won't grow again."

The innovative equipment used by 'Pretty Woman' is the latest word in the field of hair removal. This is a device working at speed several times exceeding that of other equipment in the market; and while until recently most of the laser treatments were accompanied by anesthetic ointments due to the pain caused by the procedure, in this case you don't even need to apply a pain-relieving gel as the device is equipped with a patented computerized cooling system, along with laser beams sprinkling a cooling spray to the skin.

"Our equipment has also many other advantages: it is excellent both for downy hair and dark skin, leaves no signs after the treatment except for slight temporary redness in some cases."

In addition to all the above mentioned services our clients can enjoy also the best domestic and foreign products and accessories for women's care together with the consultations of our cosmetician.

The clients prefer to come to the same place and to make all the necessary treatments at the same institution. Here you will find all the care and pampering that a woman might need under the same roof.

The women who know that the staff is professional, the treatment is courteous, that all the care proposed is new in the country, that it is really good and tested, will come first of all to 'Pretty Woman'. The customers trust our team, and should they have any problem or need to purchase a cosmetic preparation, they will come here. These are the clients that travel all over the world and still the place that they prefer to visit is 'Pretty Woman'.



Pretty Woman



*Tamar Ziskind, Israel's beauty queen for 2008 revises
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- ★ Variety of oxygen treatments for skin Rejuvenation ★ Permanent make up with natural mineral colors ★
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