



September - October 2005

BEN GURION TERMINAL III

PEOPLE

ASSEM IBRAHIM, AMBASSADOR OF EGYPT TO ISRAEL
OYBEK USMANOV, THE AMBASSADOR OF USBEKISTAN

CULTURE

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P.O.Box 228, Geneva, Switzerland

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Layout imedia-jerusalem

Accounting Roded Rinogold

Legal Support Irith Nirco

The Diplomatic Club Magazine
Printed bi-monthly

Tel: 972-3- 562.20.61/2
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Dear Friends,

Last August The Diplomatic Club celebrated its 7 year birthday.

As I look back it is like a 7 year old child, we have been over the same stages: difficulties of birth and painful exchanges of teeth.

We began as independent organization and we have succeeded in saving our independence. More than that we have strongly kept the policy of objective information.

Exactly here, in Israel, at the crossing of all religions, was born the idea to apply to people, that the main task of diplomats is providing links between countries and peoples. Open mind and "togetherness" - this is the philosophy of the Diplomatic Club .

Now we can say that we have studied a lot, and have done a lot and we definitely are adult enough not to repeat past mistakes.

From 2000 the Diplomatic Club management has been working on receiving credit for the diplomatic community.

I am happy to inform you that on April 2005 an agreement was signed between the Diplomatic Club and Leumi Credit Company regarding the credit for the Diplomatic Community and issuing Diplomatic Credit Cards:

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Consequently we are undergoing intricate negotiations with the Israeli banks concerning the privileges for opening and keeping accounts for the Diplomatic Community.

Credit cards are sponsored by commercial enterprises for obvious reasons – members of a club form a readily identifiable market for their products and services. For Club members, the card is an acceptable form of identity which makes it easy to receive discounts, benefits and specially targeted offers. Hence most airlines , theaters and prestigious department stores facilitate similar Club services that the Diplomatic Club management has organized.

We will further inform you when final organization is completed..
Sincerely Yours,

Julia Verdel
General Manager
The Diplomatic Club - Israel



ASSEM IBRAHIM, AMBASSADOR OF EGYPT TO ISRAEL

Assem Ibrahim is a true diplomat: gentleman, polyglot (he speaks, besides Arabic, English, French, and German), articulate, and armed with a vivid sense of humor. At 60, after a long and successful career in the Egyptian diplomatic corps, he was ready to enjoy retirement with his wife – herself serving as Egypt’s ambassador to Switzerland. Instead, he was asked by President Mubarak to be the new Egyptian ambassador to Israel. So much for retiring.

Ambassador Ibrahim has served as Egypt’s ambassador to Sudan, Kenya, and Ethiopia. He also served at the Egyptian permanent mission to the UN in New York. He is known to be close to President Hosni Mubarak and helped mend relations with Sudan after an abortive attempt to assassinate Mubarak in 1995, blamed on Sudan’s Islamic regime. M. Ibrahim is obviously appreciated for his diplomatic skills and experience with countries whose relations with Egypt are both sensitive and strategic.

M. Ibrahim arrived in Israel in March 2005, more than four years after former Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed Bassouni was recalled to Cairo. The post had remained vacant ever since.

The first Egyptian ambassador to Israel, the late Saad Mortada, presented his credentials in February 1980 but was recalled in 1982 following Israel’s invasion of Beirut. Muhammad Bassiouny, the Egyptian Chargé d’Affaires, took over as acting ambassador, serving in this capacity until March 1986, when he was raised to the rank of Ambassador. Bassiouny was himself recalled in October 2000.

His duties were taken over by deputy chief of mission Ihab el-Sherif, who was succeeded by Chargé d’Affaires Tarek Mahmoud el-Kouny.

When Ambassador Ibrahim presented his credentials to President Moshe Katzav in March 2005, he was glad to see again his friend Avi Granot, Katsav’s political adviser. Both men had served as their countries’ envoys in Ethiopia at the same time and had formed a warm friendship.

According to M. Ibrahim, relations between Israel and Egypt declined since October 2000 as a result of

*“First end the
occupation and then
the conflict with the
Palestinians will end.”*

Israel’s response to the *Intifada*. However, M. Ibrahim adds, Ariel Sharon’s endorsement of the road map and Israel’s withdrawal from the Gaza Strip convinced Cairo that Israel is committed to peace and that time had come to upgrade relations. *“Israel is an important neighbor in the region and it is in Egypt’s national and security interests to have good relations with its neighbors”* says M. Ibrahim. However, relations between Israel and Egypt are not “bilateral” in the traditional sense

of the term. Rather, there are trilateral relations between Egypt, Israel and the Palestinians, and the quality of relations between Israel and Egypt partially depends on the relations between Israel and the Palestinians. Indeed, the Camp David Agreements were divided into two: a bilateral peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, and a second agreement in which both parties committed to promote an autonomous Palestinian regime in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. The late President Anwar al-Sadat had made it clear that he did not sign a “separate” peace with Israel, and that Israel’s commitment to negotiate the final status of the West Bank and of the Gaza Strip with an elected and local Palestinian leadership was connected to Egypt’s agreement to sign a peace treaty with Israel.

Egypt, insists Ambassador Ibrahim, has no bilateral issue with Israel; however the current normalization between the two countries is contingent on further political progress between Israel and the Palestinians. This is because Egypt is an Arab country and considers Israel’s presence over the 1949 armistice line as the occupation of Arab land. Therefore, Egypt feels that by advocating Israel’s withdrawal to the 1949 armistice lines it is fulfilling its duty as an Arab country and showing solidarity with its fellow Palestinian Arabs.

If and when Israel withdraws to the 1949 armistice lines, M. Ibrahim argues, there will be no more significant issue between Israel and the Arab world. *“First end the occupation”*

he says, *“and then the conflict with the Palestinians will end.”*

Ambassador Ibrahim hopes that the PA has the will to contain the “armed struggle” and to transmit values of peace and tolerance to its youth. The PA’s ability to achieve security and stability, he claims, is limited because the PA is a *“shaky regime”* and therefore badly needs the support of Israel and Egypt.

“The Palestinians deserve help” says M. Ibrahim. *“If their life improves, they will have something to loose. Whether the PA is corrupt is a question of the past.”*

Trade might be more useful than aid to improve Gaza’s economic lot, and trade relations between Egypt and Israel might have a positive impact on Gaza’s economy. Trade between Israel and Egypt has doubled over the past six months. After four years of nearly frozen relations, Israel and Egypt signed an agreement in June 2005 for the sale of Egyptian natural gas to Israel. The Egyptian government committed to supply Israel with natural gas annually over a fifteen year period. This deal is expected to generate between \$2 billion and \$3 billion a year in revenue. Eastern Mediterranean Gas (EMG) – a private gas company jointly owned by state-owned Egyptian Natural Gas Holding Company (EGAS), private Israeli company Merhav and Egyptian businessman Hussein Salem – will supply state-run Israel Electric Corporation (IEC), Israel’s national electricity provider, with 1.7 billion cubic meters of liquefied natural gas (LNG) annually over 15 years. An undersea pipeline will be built to transfer the LNG from the northern Sinai town of Al-Arish to the southern Israeli city of Ashkelon. The pipeline is scheduled to begin pumping the gas next year, saving IEC an estimated \$300 million per year, or \$4.5 billion over the contract period.

This bilateral agreement was signed as a result of the diplomatic rapprochement



Ambassador of Egypt Mr. Assem Ibrahim (on the right) with Israeli’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Silwan Shalom

between Egypt and Israel. Recent gestures of reconciliation have included prisoner exchanges, the signing of a major bilateral trade deal (the “QIZ agreement”), a series of visits to Cairo

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by high-level members of the Israeli government, and of course the recent appointment of Ambassador Ibrahim to his post in Tel-Aviv.

The bilateral trade deal (also known as “Qualified Industrial Zone [QIZ] agreement”) was signed in December 2004 in Cairo between the trade ministers of Egypt, Israel and the United States. The agreement, which took eight years to negotiate, created Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs) in Egypt, allowing for duty-free export to the U.S. of certain Egyptian goods that contain Israeli inputs. The 1996 U.S.

law authorizing QIZs enables either Jordan or Egypt to export products duty free to the United States provided they contain input from Israel. Until the Egypt-Israel deal, QIZs had been established only in Jordan. The Egyptian QIZs will increase business contacts among Egyptians, Israelis and Americans.

“My job” concludes Ambassador Ibrahim *“is to bring added value to Egyptian-Israeli relations. It is the national interest of Egypt to have cordial relations with Israel. We have respected our peace treaty with you. But remember that the Palestinians are part of the equation.”*

SPECIAL THANKS



Counsellor Usama Khalil has left Israel a few weeks ago. After serving in the Egyptian Embassy as Head of Political

Section for four years he has gone back to Cairo.

We thank him for arranging the interview with His Excellency Ambassador of Egypt Mr. Assem Ibrahim and we wish Mr. Khalil the best for the future.

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Uzbekistan

By Dr. Emmanuel Navon

The Diplomatic Club Magazine meets with Uzbekistan's Ambassador to Israel, Oybek Usmanov

Ambassador Usmanov is proud of his country – and rightly so. The legendary Uzbek hospitality is instantly palpable upon walking into Uzbekistan's embassy in the yuppie neighborhood of *Zahala* in northern Tel-Aviv. One is welcomed with hearty smiles, firm handshakes, and a traditional tea served in exquisite Uzbek cups.

To many outsiders, Uzbekistan is a remote republic of Central Asia that produces cotton and suffers from an ecological disaster (the evaporation of the Aral Sea). But an encounter with the buoyant Ambassador Usmanov reveals a very different picture.

A Beacon of Culture and Tolerance

Uzbekistan is a Muslim yet secular country that combines a rare blend of respect for tradition with tolerance and openness. It is physically located at the heart of the Muslim world and has produced renowned Muslim clerics. Uzbekistan represents a moderate and tolerant version of Islam. "*Our main priority is to protect our religion from extremists*" explains Usmanov. Uzbekistan has produced major

scientists and philosophers such as Abu Ali Ibn Sino ("*Our Rambam*" says Usmanov, who masters the Hebrew language and Jewish history). Indeed, there are many similarities between Ibn Sino and Rambam ("*Maimonides*" in English). Ibn Sino, known as Avicenna in the West, wrote dozens of major books on philosophy, medicine, theology, geometry, astronomy, as well as poetry. Among his scientific works are the *Khitob al-Shifo* ("*The Book of Healing*"), a philosophical encyclopedia based on Aristotelian traditions, and the *al-Qanun al-Tibb* ("*The Canon of Medicine*"). The "*Canon of Medicine*" remained the world's authority on the subject until the seventeenth century. In the last 30 years of the 15th century it passed through fifteen Latin editions and was translated into Hebrew. An impressive monument to the life and works of the man who became known as the "doctor of doctors" stands in the Bukhara Museum, established by Uzbekistan's government in 1991, and his portrait hangs in the Hall of the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Paris. Among Uzbekistan's great scientists and thinkers are also Abu Raihon Mohammad Ibn Ahmad Al-Beruniy, Abu Abdulloh Mohammad Ibn

Musa Al-Khorazmiy, and Ahmad Ibn Muhammad ibn Kathir Al-Farghoniy and other prominent scholars.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, Uzbekistan experienced its own Renaissance, while the Ottoman Empire began to decline militarily, scientifically and culturally. Uzbekistan's Renaissance included science, architecture, literature and art. While Islam formally forbids the artistic representation of living creatures, Uzbek artist Kamaliddin Behzad (1455 - 1533) founded the school of miniature art – an artistic innovation which would have been unthinkable in other parts of the Islamic civilization. In fact, Behzad is one of the greatest artists of the medieval period, and is a legend of pictorial art not only in the Middle East, but also throughout the world.

Uzbek architects and artists from the Ferghana Valley (Mirza Zahiriddin Babur, Khumayun Shah, Shahrub Mirza, Muhammad Akbarshah and Djahangirshah) designed the Taj Mahal, the jewel of Muslim art in India and one of the universally admired masterpieces of the world's heritage. The name and identity of the architect who designed the Taj Mahal remains a mystery, however.

Ustad Ahmad (a.k.a. Isa Khan), an architect in the court of Shah Jahan from Lahore, is most often credited as the chief architect (or plan drawer) of the Taj Mahal, based on a seventeenth century manuscript which claims that Ustad Ahmad was the architect of both the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort at Delhi. Some European scholars held the view that the Taj Mahal was designed by Italian architect Geronimo Veroneo. But regardless of who the actual architect was, the influence of Uzbek architecture, art and craftsmanship on the Taj Mahal is obvious.

Uzbekistan and the Jews

There are two groups of Jews in Uzbekistan: Bukharian Jews and Ashkenazi (European) Jews. Bukharian Jews have lived in Central Asia for more than 2,500 years, and came there through ancient Iran. Some Bukharian Jews claim they are the descendents of the ten lost tribes of Israel who were exiled by the Assyrians in the 8th century B.C.E. Whether or not this is the case, the Bukharians can trace their ancestry back to the conquest of Babylonia by Cyrus, the King of Persia, in 539 B.C.E.

The term "Bukharian Jews" refers to the Central Asian Jews of the khanate of Bukhara, those of Samarkand, and the Ferghana Valley. Today, the region is divided between the former Soviet republics of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The majority of Bukharian Jews live in the Uzbek cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Tashkent, and Kokand, in Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe, and in Kyrgyzstan's capital, Bishkek.

In 1219, the Mongols, led by Genghis Khan, conquered Bukhara, pillaging and burning the city to the ground, and destroying the Bukharan Jewish community. In 1300 the Uzbek leader Amir Timur defeated the Mongols and rebuilt Samarkand and Bukhara. Timur brought in Persian Jews to work as dyers and weavers and develop the empire's textile industry.

Amir Timur's empire spread across the Middle East, the Caucasus, as

well as Central and South Asia. Mirza Zahiriddin Babur, the grand son of Amir Timur, conquered India in 15th century.

Many Jews came to Central Asia as refugees during the First World War, and over 200,000 Jews migrated to Uzbekistan during the Second World War to find a shelter from the Holocaust. Altogether 1.2 million refugees found a haven of safety and tolerance in Uzbekistan during World War II. Most of the Jews who emigrated to Uzbekistan stayed there after the War, and the percentage of Jews working in education, medicine, science, technology and culture in Uzbekistan was higher than elsewhere in the Soviet Union.

Ambassador Usmanov rightly takes pride in the fact that Jews were always a respected and flourishing minority



Ambassador Usmanov with Shimon Peres

in Uzbekistan, especially since the time of Amir Timur. Today, Timur is a national hero in Uzbekistan. He began, in the 14th century, a series of military invasions that started in Central Asia and continued all the way to Iran, Iraq, Syria, and parts of Turkey and India. Timur was also a patron of the arts and he initiated social reforms in his empire. His cultural legacy lasted far longer than any of his military accomplishments: indeed, the 15th century Renaissance in Uzbekistan, is also known as the "Timuran Renaissance."

Uzbekistan as a Geopolitical Actor

"We are keeping our traditional roots of enlightened, open Islam" explains Usmanov. "Uzbekistan is the most populated country of Central Asia (26 million inhabitants) and is physically at the center of Central Asia. Since its independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has had to face many challenges such as terrorism and drug traffic. Uzbekistan made the strategic decision of closely cooperating with its neighbors in order to face these challenges, especially with China, India, Pakistan and Iran. The conflict in Afghanistan has become a global problem, and the terror attacks of February 1999 in Uzbekistan and of September 2001 in the United States have proven the necessity of international involvement in the Afghan conflict. We, in Uzbekistan, hope that with the support of the international community as well as regional powers, we shall be able to keep Central Asia a geopolitically stable region as well as a nuclear free zone."

"We are very concerned about nuclear proliferation in our region" Usmanov admits, although he is confident that Great Britain, France and Germany will succeed in convincing Iran not to go nuclear.

Uzbekistan and Israel

Ambassador Usmanov has been serving in Israel for the past four years –not exactly the quietest period in the country's history. He is very well versed in Israeli politics and has made many friends among political and business leaders. He feels the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has taken away attention and energy from developing bilateral relations between Israel and Uzbekistan, yet is confident that a new area has opened in Israeli-Palestinian relations.

He considers Prime Minister Sharon's disengagement plan "a courageous decision that has generated a historical opportunity to renew dialogue and compromise." "The disengagement plan" he adds "has boosted Israel's international image and proved to the Palestinians that they have a partner for peace."

The Israel Airports Authority presents

Ben Gurion - Terminal III



Ben Gurion International Airport is the main aviation gateway of the State of Israel. The Airport serves the majority of passengers flying into and out of Israel.

The Airports Authority, which operates all Airports in Israel, has over recent years been contending with a constant increase in the number of passengers flying into Israel.

The Authority provided a quick fix to the problem of the increasing load at BGN, by adding grounds to the airport compound and installing technological systems, to temporarily increase the capacity of the Airport and improve service to the passenger.

And yet this was insufficient. The basic and ideal solution to the problem of capacity and service levels at the Airport is to be found in the overall plan to expand the existing airport, by establishing a new and modern passenger terminal, Terminal 3.

This will provide a solution to the growing number of passengers passing through the Airport each year, thus obtaining maximum benefit from the

new terminal, that will serve tourism, industry and agricultural export.

The principal development project of the Airports Authority was the construction of Terminal 3 at Ben-Gurion Airport.

Terminal 3 is the largest and most complex infrastructure project in Israel's history

This is the largest and most complex infrastructure project in Israel's history.

Total cost of the project was approximately NIS 3.543 billion (at March 2005 prices, including investment in the railway).

The entire cost came from the Airport Authority budget and from external bank loans taken out by the Authority.

On the opening of Terminal 3 at the beginning of November 2004, in a state ceremony attended by the President of the State of Israel and the Prime Minister, international aviation activities were transferred to it, and the buildings vacated will serve as performing assets and will be used for domestic aviation activities.

The new terminal is able to cope with significant future growth of tourist and freight traffic and ranks Ben-Gurion Airport among the world's most modern and state-of-the art airports.

As the Airports Authority's flagship project, the new Terminal symbolizes the immense change taking place in civil aviation in Israel. Terminal 3 is the largest infrastructure initiative in the State of Israel. The project is in its final stages of construction, in accordance with a time schedule determined in a detailed and complex plan.

Major objectives set by the Airports Authority have been achieved:

✈ The establishment of a modern and sophisticated airport, that will

facilitate significant growth in tourism, import and export volumes.

✈ Gradual development of the Airport to handle 12 million passengers, with the final objective being the handling of 16 million passengers annually.

✈ Provision of service to passengers and airlines at international standards.

✈ The construction of the Terminal was adapted to possible future changes, in both the size of aircraft and the level of service to passengers and in the activities of the airlines.

✈ To encourage increased international and regional trade in the coming age of overall peace.

With the approval of the Terminal 3 plan, the reciprocal relationship between the aviation activities and its environmental implications, and the quality of life within the area of the Airport and the surrounding communities, was defined and agreed upon.

A system of balances between the Airport and the environment was stringently and optimally planned. The National Council for Planning and Construction and the Government took part in this resolution.

The symbolism of the Terminal as the main air gateway of the State of Israel, is echoed in the design which reflects Israel's cultural and architectural heritage.

SOM Architects of the USA and Carmi Architects were hired to guide the design concept and the visual benchmarks of the design.

The following architects and companies were chosen to design the components of the Airside building, the infrastructure and the Energy Center: Moshe Safdie, TRA Pattelson and Shila, Shlomo Aharonson, PB Eli First and HRVAC.

Upon completion of the programmatic design, the engineering and architectural design commenced, with special emphasis on time schedules. The project was split into five main components, each handled by a separate professional team.

- The Airside terminal
- The Landside terminal
- The infrastructure
- The Energy Center
- The diversion of the Ayalon River

Construction work began in May 1998, with the selection of the earthworks and subterranean infrastructure contractor.

Approximately 30 contractors were involved in the construction of the project, the majority of which are Israeli, all operating in close coordination and under strict supervision and guidance of the project manager. In parallel, the Airports Authority is busy purchasing various systems for the Terminal, including: Elevators, escalators, baggage handling systems, boarding bridges, and control and communications systems.

The activities of Terminal 3 for the benefit of the environment include the following components:

✈ Acoustic treatment of residential houses in accordance with yardsticks determined by the Ministry of the Environmental Affairs, funded by the Airports Authority.

✈ Limitations on night takeoffs.

✈ Assistance to local Councils affected by the plan.

✈ Minimizing environmental interference, by implementing suitable procedures and taking measures that are among the most advanced in the world, including: Fuel leak detection system, supply of clean electric power to parked aircraft, as an alternative to outdated auxiliary engines, mechanical backup of systems which are liable to pollute water, land etc.

✈ In place of local treatment of sewage – BGA is linked to the regional sewage treatment plant and uses recycled effluent.

✈ Installation of the latest type of pollution monitoring and control systems, their operation and direct linkage to the Ministry of the Environmental Affairs.

✈ Linking of BGA with population centers via railway. This means of transport, which is the most environment-friendly, will be used to leverage mass transport development, while reducing vehicle traffic and minimizing air pollution.



The Israel Airport Authority holds, operates, develops, and manages airports in Israel: Ben-Gurion, Jerusalem, Haifa, Herzliya, Rosh Pina, Sdeh Dov, Eilat, and Ovda.

Furthermore, the Authority is responsible for the planning and construction of an airport as specified in the aviation master plan, as well as advancing and developing air transport, improving the operational efficiency of the airports and achieving a suitable level of air safety.



The new international Terminal significantly improves the basket of services provided to the passengers, their companions, the greeters and visitors to Ben Gurion International Airport.

The Terminal 3 spreads over an area of 1,700 dunam (425 acres) and has a built up area of about 270,000 sq. m. (about 2.9 million sq. ft.).

The passenger handling process begins in the Check In Hall, which is illuminated by natural light. After undergoing the security check and checking in his luggage, the passenger passes through portals set in a massive, seven story high stone wall, and reach the Sky Hall and the Bye & Buy Mall.

The design of the Sky Hall and the Bye & Buy Mall fully reflect the Israeli tradition whereby family and friends accompany the passengers and spend time with them before the flight. The passenger can take leave of his relatives in relaxed and comfortable surroundings, and enjoy the cafés, shops, and lounging areas.

An inclined glass wall provides a panoramic view of the scenery surrounding the Airport and overlooks the Airside building and aircraft parking apron.

After passing through passport control, the passenger enters the Connector which links the Landside building to the Airside building.

Passengers will be able to move through the connector on speedwalk conveyors, common in airports worldwide.

After traversing the Connector, the passenger enters the Rotunda, the Terminal's unique round hall, which is dominated by a fountain at its center and populated with a wide range of duty free shops, restaurants, coffee shops and additional service stations, such as the Mother and Child Room, games and a synagogue. The Rotunda is only a short distance from the boarding gates.

From the Rotunda, the passenger takes a route leading to the boarding gates. These are grouped in three concourses, each containing 10 boarding gates.

The passengers will enjoy the comfort and novelty of boarding the aircraft through the Concourses, which are spacious exit foyers to which the boarding bridges are connected.

A panoramic view of the Airport and the scenery surrounding it can be seen from the terminal through a giant inclined glass wall, which is in itself a unique attraction. Inbound passengers can catch a glimpse of the Terminal through the windows of the aircraft taxiing on its way to one of the twenty four gates.

Upon entering the Airside building, inbound passengers will perceive transparent and inclined glass walls in each concourse. From there they will

Major Tasks Performed by the Authority in 2004

- ✈ Completion of the Terminal 3 project, finalizing of running-in stages, and occupancy in preparation for operation in November 2004.
- ✈ Completion of organizational and operational preparations prior to the operation of Terminal 3, while implementing the changes necessary to improve efficiency and reduce labor costs.
- ✈ Maintenance of economic stability.
- ✈ Maintenance of service level at Ben-Gurion Airport during the transition to Terminal 3.
- ✈ Coping with claims for compensation in accordance with Clause 197 of the Planning and Construction Law.
- ✈ Improvement of safety and operational efficiency in the air space.
- ✈ Promotion of planning for the development of airports.
- ✈ Improvement of the Authority's community relations and public image.
- ✈ Development of internal aviation airports and land border terminals.
- ✈ Preparations for the construction of an alternative airport to those at Eilat and Ovda, to be located at Ramat Timna.
- ✈ Implementation and accompaniment of legislation for amendment to the Airports Authority Law.

make use of the speedwalk conveyors to move down to the mezzanine level, while viewing the outbound passengers on the lower level.

The spacious and round mezzanine level overlooks the impressive and dynamic vista of the Rotunda - the Airside building - with its shops and restaurants, and impressive architectural design as well as the fountain at the center of the Hall.

Upon arriving at the Landside building, inbound passengers will pass through the passport control hall, baggage collection and customs and will finally be welcomed by their relatives and friends in the Greeters' Hall. This hall was impressively designed and the visitors will benefit from a wide selection of restaurants, shops and additional facilities.

The expansive and terraced Garden, incorporating varied scenery, is revealed to those exiting the Terminal. The view of this enchanted and serene Garden will accompany passengers upon their entry into Israel.

Public transport is at the disposal of the passengers and their companions on the lower tier of the multi-levelled road.

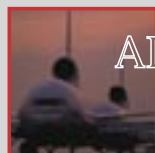


facts & figures

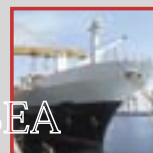


Source: The Israel Airport Authority

No 1 in Israel



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The making of DISTORTION

by Haim Bouzaglo

The film was born of an almost existential need I felt deep inside me during the period in which buses were exploding every other day, sometimes only a few meters from my neighborhood café.

I shared my desire to make this film with Yoram Millo, my regular photographer, a desire contrary to the natural inclination to suppress these feelings that well up inside of us, a tendency to continue as if nothing's happened, just business as usual...

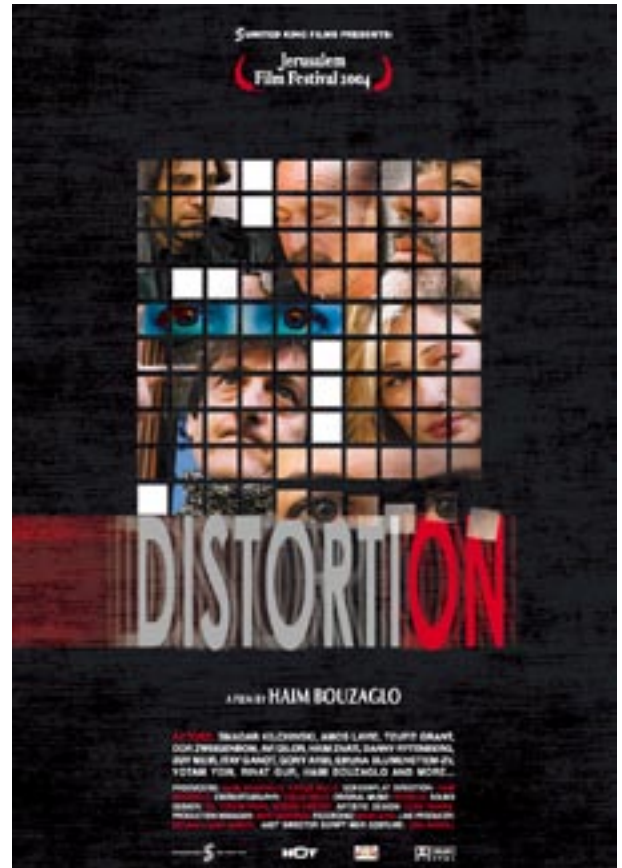
So I sat down to write, but how can one write? How can you be creative when you're living a real life Russian Roulette, when every casual visit to a café, ride on a bus or stop at an ATM could be your final scene?

A few days later, everything just came together, with everyone pitching in. A process evolved that is more than a film.

Reality wrote this script. For the first time in my life I found myself acting out what was actually happening to me, trying to rewrite reality into a script, and desperately using cinematic and scriptwriting tricks and manipulations to advance the plot. Thus, a spellbinding dialog was created between life and its cinematic mirror: life, imagination and reality turned into an integrated creative whole, into a document that records one crazy moment in this crazy country during those months in which you could actually blow up during the filming of a scene in a café, a scene ending with a terrorist attack...

This is the first part of a trilogy of Situation films. The second is entitled "Janem, Janem". The third part will be filmed in the near future.

Haim Bouzaglo born in Jerusalem in 1952, He studied literature and theatre at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is the author of the film "Janem, Janem" that received 5 Israeli Oscars Nominations and the film "Distortion". He received Platinum Remi Award at the Worldest Houston Film & Video Festival, the Best Editor Award at the Syracuse Film Festival in New York, the Berlin Festival Silver Bear Award, the Israeli Oscar Award for the Best Film.



These are the days of the Intifada in Israel: suicide bombing. Attacks, tension, anxiety. A director/ playwright promises to present a new play to the theater, but he just can't write. His girlfriend, a documentary director for the Second Channel, is at the height of preparing the story of a former military man who opened a business but went bankrupt because of the economic situation. The director, in his bitter desperation, turns to a private investigator in hopes that he will add some interest to his life. He asks him to trail his girlfriend day by day, minute by minute...

Without knowing it, the detective turns into the real author of a play being written straight from the pages of life...

The real-life story and the play being written directly from real life; the documentary and the investigation are interwoven throughout the film. The drama builds and boils, and at the end reaches a theatrical and surprising climax.

ACTORS: SMADAR KILCHINSKI AMOS LAVIE TZUFIT GRANT DOR ZWEIGENBOM AVI GILOR HAIM ZNATI DANNY RYTENBERG ZIV MEIR ITAY GANOT GONY ARBI EMUNA BLUMENSTIEM-ZVI YOTAM YEIN RINAT GUR HAIM BOUZAGLO AND MORE....

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