



2011

ICFR REPORT

**World Jewish Congress
Executive Committee Meeting
New York, 29 March 2012**



Israel Council on Foreign Relations

2011

Events

During 2011 the ICFR hosted a number of visiting foreign dignitaries and conducted several important symposia. These events were well attended and received extensive press coverage in both Israeli and foreign media:

Righting an Historic Wrong: The Ongoing Challenge of Restitution in East Central Europe: (panel discussion). Speakers were Dr. Laurence Weinbaum, who spoke on the phenomenon of larceny as a motivation for locals to participate in the destruction of their Jewish neighbors; Dr. Raphael Vago, Senior Lecturer in Modern East European History, Tel Aviv University, who spoke on antisemitism and the present political situation; and Ambassador David Peleg, Executive Director, World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO), Former Israeli Ambassador to Poland, who discussed current efforts to retrieve Jewish assets (May 2011).

The European Union: Facing New Challenges: (Conference in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, The Center for the Study of European Politics and Society). The event focused on the effects on Europe of the popular uprisings and regime changes in the Middle East. Speakers included Prof. David Newman, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, BGU; Prof. Amy Verdun, Co-Editor of the *Journal of Common Market Studies*; Prof. Alfred Tovias, ICFR Board Member and Chair of Department of International Relations, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Prof. Charles Kupchan, Georgetown University; Dr. Claire Spencer, Head, Middle East and North Africa Programme, Chatham House, UK; Dr. Sharon Pardo, Head of Center for the Study of European Politics and Society, BGU (May 2011).

Austrian Association of International Affairs and United Nations hosted ICFR President Ambassador Avi Primor in Vienna, where he was invited to speak before a capacity audience (May 2011).

Kick-off event of Israeli-European Young Diplomats Forum: held at the residence of the EU Representative in Israel, Ambassador Andrew Standley (April 2011.) For more on this program, see below.

Perspectives on the Current Maelstrom in the Middle East: (symposium dedicated to the memory of Dr. David Kimche on the first anniversary of his passing). The evening was chaired by ICFR President Ambassador Avi Primor and Board Member Ambassador Moshe Arad, both of whom were close friends

of Dr. Kimche for over forty years. The speakers were Prof. Shlomo Avineri, Hebrew University; David Sultan, former Israeli ambassador to Egypt; and Dr. Shmuel Bar, IDC Herzliya. Rafi Barack, Director-General of the Foreign Ministry, also presented a brief evaluation of recent developments. The event was attended by a capacity audience, including representatives of some fifteen foreign embassies and was covered in the media (March 2011).

Joschka Fischer: Former Vice Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany (in cooperation with IDC Herzliya Center for European Studies and the Heinrich Böll Foundation), who spoke on "The German Foreign Ministry and the Nazi Past." Greetings were delivered by ICFR President Ambassador Avi Primor; H.E. Dr. Dr. h.c. Harald Kindermann, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Israel; and Marc Berthold, Director, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Israel. Mr. Fischer was introduced by Prof. Moshe Zimmermann, Richard M. Koebner Professor of German History, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem/Member of the Historical Commission of the German Foreign Ministry. The event was moderated by Marianne Zepp, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Israel (March 2011).

Dinner for Foreign Ambassadors posted in Israel: Held at residence of ICFR President Avi Primor. Attendees included members of the foreign diplomatic corps stationed in Israel as well as members of the ICFR board (January 2011).

A Cold War Casualty in Jerusalem, 1948: The Assassination of Witold Hulanicki: (Seminar dedicated to the memory of the former Polish Consul in Jerusalem Witold Hulanicki (1890–1948)). Opening remarks were delivered by H.E. Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland and Yair Stern, son of Avraham (Yair) Stern (1907–1942), Founder of Lechi /FFI. The keynote lecture was delivered by Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez, Research Fellows, Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The event was moderated by Dr. Laurence Weinbaum, Director, The Israel Council on Foreign Relations/ Chief Editor, *The Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* (December 2011).

Sali Berisha: Prime Minister of Albania, who spoke on "'Righteous among the Nations'—Albania's History of Friendship with Jews and the Jewish State." The event was chaired by ICFR Board member Dr. Yosef Govrin, Former Deputy Director-General, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (November 2011).

Young Sam Ma: Outgoing Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, who spoke on "Korea and Israel: Divergent Paths that Meet." Opening remarks were delivered by Herzl Makov, Director, Menachem Begin Heritage Center. The event was chaired by Ambassador Mordechai Arbell, ICFR Board Member and former Israeli ambassador to Korea (August 2011).

Fernández Reyna: President of the Dominican Republic, who spoke on "Expecting the Unexpected: The Challenge in Contemporary International Affairs." The event was chaired by Ambassador Mordechai Palzur, Chairman of the World Jewish Congress Research Institute, and former Israeli ambassador to the Dominican Republic (June 2011).

Reflections on the History and Structure of the European Union and the Current State of Israeli–EU Relations: Seminar in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Greetings were delivered by Michael Mertes, Representative, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Israel and Dr. Laurence Weinbaum. Speakers included Dr. Sharon Pardo, Director, Center for the Study of European Politics and Society at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Ambassador Andrew Standley, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Israel; Ambassador Tzipora

Rimon, Director, Department for Multilateral European Institutions, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Nadine Mensel, Deputy Representative, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Israel (November, 2011).

Policy Talk: "Riots, General Strikes & Tent Cities: Comparing Israel and Europe's Social Upheaval." Panelists: Dr. Karnit Flug, Deputy Governor, Bank of Israel, Member of Trajtenberg Committee; Stav Shaffir, Co-Initiator of Housing Protest with Daphna Leef; David Landau, The Economist, former Editor-in-Chief, *Haaretz*; Anna Cardenes, Spanish News Agency EFE. The event took place at the residence of Polish Ambassador H.E. Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska and was chaired by Dr. Carlo Strenger, Tel Aviv University and *Haaretz* (October, 2011).

Policy Talk "The Aftermath of the Wikileaks Report: Business as Usual or the Beginning of Self-Censorship?" Panelists: Yossi Melman, Journalist, *Haaretz*; Kurt Heuer, Press Secretary, US Embassy in Israel; Eynat Shlein-Michael, Head, International Affairs Bureau, Center for Political Research, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The event took place at the residence of the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Dr. h.c. Harald Kindermann was and was chaired by Ingo Niemann, Second Secretary, Political Section, German Embassy in Israel (June 2011).

"Reflections on the History and Structure of the European Union and the Current State of Israeli-EU Relations". Symposium in cooperation with the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs

The Council's thrice-yearly Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs (IJFA) continues to appear regularly. Over the years, the journal has developed a strong reputation, attracting the writings of many of the best-known practitioners and scholars in the field of foreign affairs from Israel and abroad. In recent issues, among those whose writings have appeared in the journal are Prof. Shlomo Avineri; Dr. Shmuel Bar; Prof. Moshe Ma'oz; Prof. Yehuda Bauer; Prof. Robert Wistrich; Dr. Oded Eran; Arch Puddington; Prof. Robert J. Lieber; Prof. Yossi Shain; Prof. Dina Porat; Prof. Shimon Shetreet; Matthias Kuentzel; and Dr. Robert Rozett. Many of the most important issues on the WJC agenda are addressed in the pages of the journal, including the threat of a nuclear Iran; the so-called Arab Spring and its implications in the Middle East; European anti-Semitism; attempts to appropriate or contextualize the Holocaust; and the restitution of Holocaust-era property. Each journal also includes a substantial section devoted to reviews of contemporary literature on foreign affairs, the Middle East, and international Jewish issues.

The IJFA regularly publishes the proceedings of lectures presented at the Council and these constitute an important record of the remarks of visiting foreign statesmen. The publication is circulated worldwide, and among its paid subscribers are major universities, libraries, and institutes/councils of foreign affairs.

A selection of the articles is available online (www.israeljfa.com). Through the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) in Berlin, some of the journal's articles are catalogued and accessible on the internet site "IREON Gateway: International Relations and Area Studies Online." Individual articles are also posted on the Faculty Forum site of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME). The Faculty Forum is regularly read by over 20,000 people, mainly academics. The German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) also regularly posts IJFA articles on its site. Many Israeli and foreign university professors use

material taken from the journal in courses on international relations. This has also increased the publication's prestige and visibility.

The Israeli–European Young Diplomats Forum

The ICFR Israeli-European Young Diplomats Forum enables young Israeli and European diplomats currently posted in Israel to exchange ideas on issues of common interest. The Forum offers Israeli and European Union young diplomats and other Israeli public servants a much-needed opportunity for informal contacts—without a political agenda. The objective is to promote close and vibrant relationships that will endure beyond the period of service of the European diplomats in Israel. The forum provides participants with an opportunity to interact through various formats, such as policy talks held on a regular basis with high-ranking Israeli and European officials, academics, and civil society representatives. At these talks, Israeli diplomats are provided with deeper insights into the history, structure and internal workings of the EU as well as EU perspectives on Israel and EU–Israel relations. At the same time, the European diplomats gain a better understanding of regional political realities and first-hand insights into Israeli society.

This program has received the financial support of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, the EU Delegation to Israel, the Polish Embassy in Tel Aviv, the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and various other EU member state embassies in Israel, including those of Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, and Sweden.

Since its launch last April, response to the forum has been overwhelmingly positive—so much so that other Israeli ministries have requested that representatives of their staff be allowed to participate as well. Thus far, participating in the program, in addition to the MFA are the Ministry of Tourism, Finance, Defense, Agriculture, Science, and Education. In addition, the Bank of Israel, Prime Minister's Office, and the Jerusalem and Tel Aviv-Jaffa municipalities have also joined the forum. The US embassy has also expressed interest in cooperating with the Forum and having the ICFR design a parallel program aimed at young diplomats from North and South America. For the period covered in this report, Forum events have included:

Cooperation with other Institutions

The Council maintains a close relationship with several Israeli institutions, with which it has co-sponsored events, most notably the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya; The Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in Jerusalem; the Menachem Begin Heritage Center; Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung in Tel Aviv. It also has a cooperation agreement with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, which has coordinated several international gatherings of representatives of councils and institutes of foreign affairs, and has worked closely with PISM (Polish Institute of International Affairs) and the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs.

The ICFR also maintains an active facebook presence.