



# International Consultation of Jewish Parliamentarians

Jerusalem, 27-29 June 2011



## S P E A K E R S   B I O G R A P H I E S

### **Mr. Khaled Abu Toameh**

Khaled Abu Toameh is a veteran award-winning journalist who has been covering Palestinian affairs for nearly three decades. An Arab Muslim, he studied at Hebrew University and began his career as a reporter for a PLO-affiliated newspaper in Jerusalem. Abu Toameh currently works for several international media organizations, serving as the 'eyes and ears' of foreign journalists in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. His articles have appeared in numerous newspapers around the world, including The Wall Street Journal and The Sunday Times (UK). He has been a producer and consultant for NBC News since 1989 and has been writing on Palestinian affairs for The Jerusalem Post since 2002.

### **Congressman Gary Ackerman**

Congressman Gary Ackerman is presently serving his fifteenth term in the U.S. House of Representatives where he represents the Fifth Congressional District of New York. Ackerman was first elected to public office – the New York State Senate – in 1978 and subsequently elected to Congress in 1983.

Congressman Ackerman's significant legislative highlights include: President Bush invoking the Congressman's measure to impose sanctions against the Palestinian Authority for not complying with peace agreements it signed with the U.S. and Israel; his measure that prevents war criminals and human rights abusers who have perpetrated genocide, torture, terrorism or other atrocities, from entering the U.S. and deports those already there; the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program which provides a federal insurance backstop critical to the rebuilding of Ground Zero in New York and other potential targets of terrorist attacks; and, the new law that imposes the toughest ever economic sanctions on Iran.

Congressman Ackerman is also well known for his many missions to feed the starving people of Ethiopia and the Sudan and for playing a leading role in the rescue of Ethiopian Jews and aiding their emigration to Israel. Active in the Middle East peace process, Ackerman has met with the current and most past Israeli prime ministers and the heads of all the Arab countries in an effort to help secure peace in the region.

Congressman Ackerman was instrumental in convincing the German government to establish a \$110 million fund to compensate 18,000 Holocaust survivors and to investigate whether 3300 former Nazi soldiers now living in the U.S. and collecting German pensions are war criminals.

## **M.K. Rachel Adatto**

Dr. Rachel Adatto was elected to Knesset in 2009 and is a member of the Labor, Health and Welfare Committee, among others. Her legislative focus is improving the Israeli health system, strengthening health care services in the country's periphery, and promoting women's health. Dr. Adatto is both an accomplished physician and hospital administrator who for many years was an advisor to the Israeli government on health issues. From 1995-2009, she was Deputy Director General of Shaare Zedek Medical Center.

## **Amb. Rafael Barak**

Rafael Barak is Deputy Director General for Western Europe in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A career diplomat since 1977, his previous assignment was Deputy Chief of Mission in Washington, after which he was Charge' d'affaires of the Embassy in Paris. He also served as Deputy Director General for Coordination and Director of the Director General's Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After the signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993, he was named the Chief Coordinator for negotiations with the Palestinians. An alumnus cum laude of the Rothschild Foundation Scholarship program, he earned an M.A. degree in Political Science at the Hebrew University.

## **Mr. Nir Barkat**

Nir Barkat was born in 1959 and raised in Jerusalem. He served in the Paratroopers Brigade of the Israel Defense Forces for six years (1977-83) and reached the rank of Major. He received his bachelor degree in computer science at Jerusalem's Hebrew University. He began his career in the hi-tech industry by founding a software company which later became an incubator venture firm. He also helped found the social investment company IVN. Barkat entered politics in January 2003 when he founded the party Yerushalayim Tatzli'ah ("Jerusalem Will Succeed") and ran in the Jerusalem mayoral race, gaining 43% of the vote. He then became head of the opposition on the city council, until the 2008 when he elected as Mayor.

## **Prof. Irwin Cotler**

Irwin Cotler is a Canadian Member of Parliament having first being elected in a by-election in November 1999

On December 12, 2003, the Prime Minister appointed him Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. He was reappointed following the General Election of June 2004 and served in that office until the general election of January 2006. He is currently serving as Liberal Special Counsel on Human Rights & International Justice, is a member of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Human Rights, and Chair of the All-Party Save Darfur Parliamentary Coalition. A leading public advocate in

and out of Parliament for the Human Rights Agenda, he headed the Canadian Delegation to the Stockholm International Forum on the Prevention of Genocide.

An international human rights lawyer, Professor Cotler served as Counsel to former prisoners of conscience in the former Soviet Union (Andrei Sakharov & Nathan Sharansky), South Africa (Nelson Mandela), Latin America (Jacobo Timmerman), and Asia (Trade Union Leader Muchtar Pakpahan). More recently, he served as Counsel to the leading democracy advocate in the Arab world, Professor Saad Edin Ibrahim; and more recently, as International Legal Council to Shoaib Choudhury, a Muslim Bangladesh journalist presently charged with sedition, treason, and blasphemy for advocating nothing other than inter-faith dialogue and peace with Israel.

A noted peace activist, he has been a leader in the movement for arms control, and helped develop "Peace Law" as an area of both academic inquiry and legal advocacy; as well, Professor Cotler has been engaged –both as scholar and participant observer– in the search for peace in the Middle East. He has lectured in both Arab countries and Israel for over thirty years, and has been an active participant in rapprochement dialogues between Israelis and Palestinians. He was the first Canadian Government Minister to visit the Middle East – promoted a common justice agenda in the region– and secured agreement among the Justice Ministers of Egypt, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority to participate in the first ever joint Justice Forum.

A leader in the struggle against impunity and the development of international humanitarian law, Professor Cotler served as Counsel to the Deschênes Commission of Inquiry in the matter of bringing Nazi war criminals to justice; filed amicus briefs before the International Criminal Tribunals for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda; and was leading advocate for the establishment of an International Criminal Court.

A long-time advocate in the international struggle against racism and discrimination of any kind, Professor Cotler was at the forefront of the international struggle against apartheid, as well as the architect of legal remedies against racism in Canada and beyond, both in his capacity as Minister of Justice and formerly as legal counsel for national and international NGOs.

### **Mr. Dan Diker**

Dan Diker was elected Secretary General of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) in June 2011, having served as Secretary General Designate since November 2010. He previously served as Middle East Policy Advisor to the WJC since June 2009 and WJC Director of Strategic Affairs since June 2010.

From 2006 to 2010, Mr. Diker served as the Director of the Institute for Contemporary Affairs at the The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, headed by Israel's former UN Ambassador, Dr. Dore Gold, where he also was Senior Foreign Policy Analyst since 2002.

He was editor and contributing author of the JCPA's 2010 policy book, Israel's Red Line Security Requirements Opposite a Prospective Palestinian State. He was also editor and contributing author of the JCPA's policy book series, Iran's Race for Regional Supremacy:

Implications for the Middle East. In 2010, Mr. Diker was elected Fellow of the Jerusalem Center. Prior to joining the Jerusalem Center, Mr. Diker was Knesset Affairs reporter for Channel One English News. Mr. Diker's analyses regularly appear in the Jerusalem Post, and the Israeli Weekly Makor Rishon. His articles have been published in the Middle East Journals Middle East Quarterly and Azure. Mr. Diker's articles have also appeared in the Washington Examiner and the leading US political blog Power Line.

Mr. Diker also appears as a Middle East Affairs commentator for Israel's Channel One English News, the Knesset's Channel 99, (Israel's CSPAN) and provides political commentary for international news networks CNN, BBC, Fox, and Arab networks Al Hurrah and Al Jazeera. He is also an Adjunct Fellow of the Washington DC based Hudson Institute.

Mr. Diker is a 1984 Graduate of Harvard University and immigrated to Israel in 1990.

Prior to his making Aliya in the middle of the first Gulf War in 1990, Mr. Diker, studied at the Harvard University Graduate School of Business, and had served as a marketing executive at the former Drexel Burnham Lambert and then as executive assistant to Peter J Solomon, former co-chairman of investment banking at Shearson Lehman Brothers.

### **M.K. Yuli Edelstein**

Yuli Edelstein was born in 1958 in Chernovitz, Ukraine. He studied foreign languages at the Moscow Institute for Teacher Training. A former aliya activist and Hebrew teacher in Moscow and a Prisoner of Zion (1984-87), he immigrated to Israel in 1987 where he served as Vice President of the Zionist Forum in Israel (1988-1996). In 1990 he graduated from the Jerusalem Fellows Program, and from 1990-93 was a Department Head at the Melitz Center for Zionist Education. In 1993-94 he served as an advisor to then opposition leader MK Benjamin Netanyahu. He was a founding member of Yisrael ba-Aliya in 1996, and has been a member of Knesset since May of that year.

Yuli Edelstein served as Minister of Immigrant Absorption, from June 1996 - July 1999, and as Deputy Minister of Immigrant Absorption from March 2001 until February 2003. In the 16th and 17th Knesset he served as Deputy Speaker. In March 2009 Yuli Edelstein was appointed Minister of Public Affairs and the Diaspora.

### **M.K. Shai Hermesh**

Shai Hermesh was born in Tel-Aviv in 1944. His military service was spent first in the Nahal brigade, and later in the paratroops brigade. As a member of the "Yegev" core of the Ha'Noar Ha'Oved (Labor Party youth movement), he joined Kibbutz Kfar Azza, on the Gaza Strip border. He has a B.A. degree in economics and sociology and an MBA in Business Management from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

For 25 years, Shai has served in the military reserve in the paratroops brigade. In the Six Day War, he took part in the battle for Jerusalem, fought in the Yom Kippur War on the Suez Canal, and in Lebanon - in the 1982 Lebanon War.

He is a member of the National Security Council, the Broadcasting Authority Forum, the Negev Development Authority, leadership institutions of the Kibbutz Movement, the Histadrut leadership, as well as being an active director in several public companies.

He served as the mayor of the Sha'ar Hanegev regional council for fifteen years. In June 2002, Shai Hermesh was elected Treasurer of the Jewish Agency. In May 2006 he took his seat in the Israeli Knesset, as a member of the Kadimma party.

### **M.K. Nitzan Horowitz**

Nitzan Horowitz is an Israeli journalist and politician. He was the Foreign Affairs commentator and head of the International desk at News 10, the news division of Channel 10, before being elected to the Knesset on the New Movement-Meretz list in 2009.

Horowitz was born in Rishon LeZion in 1965. He graduated the Tel Aviv University Law School. In his early journalistic career he served as a Military Affairs reporter during the later phase of the 1982 Lebanon war, as well as the International News editor at Israel Army Radio (1983–1987). In 1987 he began working at Hadashot as the Foreign Affairs editor. In 1989 he started his career at Haaretz, as the Foreign Affairs Editor. He served as Haaretz correspondent in Paris (1993–1998), covering also the European Union, and as Haaretz correspondent in Washington D.C. (1998–2001). Back in Israel, Horowitz was the chief foreign affairs columnist for Haaretz.

When "News 10" began broadcasting on January 2002, Horowitz founded its international desk. His work there included creating major documentary films following the Tsunami disaster in Eastern Asia and the failed manhunt after Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan, and regular appearances on News 10's current affairs show, London at Kirschenbaum, for which he provided reports and analysis of global news.

### **Mr. Herb Keinon**

Herb Keinon is Diplomatic Correspondent for the Jerusalem Post and has been with the paper for the last 20 years. During this time he has covered a wide variety of different beats, including Jerusalem, immigration and absorption, religious parties, haredim, and the settlements. He has also been a features writer and weekly columnist at the paper. Mr. Keinon took over the diplomatic beat in August 2000, just after the failed Camp David summit, and just before the start of the current violence. Mr. Keinon is responsible for covering the prime minister and the foreign minister, and often travels with the Prime Minister on his trips abroad. As such, Mr. Keinon has up-close knowledge and an intimate perspective of the current confrontation and the various diplomatic attempts at solving it. In addition, Mr. Keinon appears frequently on a variety of radio and television programs in the US, Canada, and Europe as a guest commentator on the situation in Israel. He has also lectured widely both in Israel and the US on the subject. Mr. Keinon, originally from Denver, has a BA in political science from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and an MA in journalism from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

## **Amb. Ronald S. Lauder**

International philanthropist, investor, art collector, and public servant, Amb. Ronald S. Lauder combines a deep commitment to his heritage in a mosaic of philanthropic endeavors that reaches around the world.

From 1983 to 1986, Ronald Lauder served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Affairs.

In 1986, he was appointed by President Reagan as United States Ambassador to Austria. During his posting there he built strong diplomatic bonds between the two countries while personally repudiating Kurt Waldheim during his election as President.

Ambassador Lauder's experience in Austria heightened his deep appreciation and commitment to his Jewish heritage. Afterwards, he sought to revitalize Jewish life across Eastern Europe in communities that had been devastated by the Holocaust. To this end, in 1987, he established The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation. More than 20 years on, the Foundation now supports 37 Jewish schools, camps and community centers in Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. In the past two decades, Amb. Lauder's efforts have awakened thousands of Jewish youngsters to their common heritage and accomplished something quite extraordinary: where once Jews were afraid to be openly Jewish, young men now walk the streets of these countries openly and proudly wearing yarmulkes as they travel to study and learn.

In 1997, Amb. Lauder was elected as President of the Jewish National Fund, one of the oldest and most important philanthropies designed to aid the State of Israel. Prior to his election, the JNF was beset by scandal and financial improprieties. Amb. Lauder has been credited with helping restore the JNF's solid fiscal reputation and helped turn its focus to the number one environmental problem facing Israel – its growing water crisis. Amb. Lauder subsequently became Chairman of the Board of the JNF.

In February 1999, Amb. Lauder was elected as Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

To build better understanding between different people and cultures, in 1987 Amb. Lauder created an International Student Exchange Program between Jewish high school students in New York City and Vienna. Since its inception, the program has grown to include students from Budapest, Warsaw, Prague, St. Petersburg, Berlin and Sofia.

Amb. Lauder's long interest in art and his commitment to justice led him to create and head the Committee for Art Recovery that has helped establish international laws to recover art stolen by the Nazis during World War II. The Committee has helped retrieve many important paintings and deliver them to the heirs of their rightful owners. This work continues to this day with several important projects still ongoing.

In 2008 Amb. Lauder's was elected as President of the World Jewish Restitution Organization.

Amb. Lauder also serves as Chairman of the Jewish Heritage Council; Director of the International Board of Governors of the International Society for Yad Vashem; member of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, member of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Theological Seminary; member of the Board of Directors of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee; member of the Board of Trustees of the Anti-Defamation League Foundation; member of the Board of Trustees of The Abraham Fund; Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Sakharov Archives at Brandeis University and member of the International Board of Governors of the Tel Aviv Museum. Mr. Lauder combined his belief in free markets, free trade and democratic capitalism with his interest in Israel, and has been a major supporter of The Shalem Center, a free market think-tank, in Jerusalem since its founding. He is also an Honorary Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art.

The son of the late Estée and Joseph Lauder, founders of The Estée Lauder Companies Inc., Ronald Lauder was born on February 26, 1944. He graduated from the Bronx High School of Science and holds a Bachelors degree in International Business from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He studied at the University of Paris, and received a Certificate in International Business from the University of Brussels. He holds the positions of non-executive Chairman of the Board of Directors of Central European Media Enterprises Ltd., and Chairman of Clinique Laboratories LLC.

Amb. Lauder was elected as President of the World Jewish Congress in June 2007.

### **M.K. Limor Livnat**

Limor Livnat, MK, was born in Haifa, Israel. While in the Israel Defense Forces, she served in the Education and Social Welfare Unit. She studied Hebrew Literature at Tel Aviv University and was the first woman elected Student Union Vice-Chairwoman.

First elected to the Knesset in 1992, Ms. Livnat has been a member of the Knesset Education and Culture, Labor and Welfare, Finance, Constitution, Law and Justice, State Control and Drug Abuse Committees. She has chaired the Knesset Committee for the Advancement of the Status of Women and its Parliamentary Committee for Inquiry into Domestic Violence. She also chaired the Ministerial Committee for the Advancement of the Status of Women. Ms. Livnat has served as vice-chairperson of the World Likud Movement and as head of the Likud Information Committee.

From June 1996 to July 1999, she served as Minister of Communications. She was appointed Minister of Education in March 2001. In addition, she was appointed Minister of Culture and Sports in December 2002. Limor Livnat continued to hold both portfolios after the establishment of the new government in February 2003. In March 2009, Limor Livnat was appointed Minister of Culture and Sport.

### **Mr. Ya'akov Ne'eman**

Yaakov Neeman was born in Tel Aviv in 1939. Following army service, he studied law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1961-64). He went on to complete his LL.M. and J.S.D. (Doctor of Law, Hons.) at the New York University Law School. He has been a

member of the Israeli Bar Association since 1966. He has served as visiting professor of law at the University of California in Los Angeles, Tel Aviv University, New York University, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He served as Director General of the Ministry of Finance from 1979-1981.

Yaakov Neeman has served on a number of public committees and as chairman of, among others, the Committee of Inquiry into the Inter-Relation between the Tax Laws and Foreign Currency Restrictions and the Public Committee on the Allocation of Distributions by the Ministry of Interior.

He has served as a member of the Board of Governors of the Bank of Israel and is a member of the Central Committee of the World Bank. He is the author or editor of seven books and over 30 articles in the fields of taxation, corporation and securities law, published both in Israel and abroad.

Yaakov Neeman served as Minister of Justice from June-August 1996. In July 1997 he was appointed Minister of Finance, serving until his resignation in December 1998. In March 2009 Yaakov Neeman was appointed Minister of Justice.

### **Mrs. Fiamma Nirenstein**

Fiamma Nirenstein has been a member of the Italian Parliament since 2008 where she serves as Vice President of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies and chairs the Parliamentary Committee for the Inquiry on Anti-Semitism. The Inquiry began its work on January 27, 2010 and will continue for the entire year.

Until her election, Mrs. Nirenstein wrote from Israel for "Il Giornale", a daily newspaper and she still contributes to as analyst, as well as for "Panorama" weekly. From 1991 until December 2006, she worked as correspondent and columnist for "La Stampa" daily.

Mrs. Nirenstein is a member of the board of the Italian „Magna Carta“ Foundation as well as a board member of European Friends of Israel (EFI). She is also one of the six members of the steering committee of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition on Combating Anti-Semitism (ICCA), inaugurated on February 2009 with the London Conference, and among the founder members of the „Friends of Israel Initiative“, established in 2010 by former Spanish Prime Minister José María Aznar. On December 16, 2009, Mrs. Nirenstein, together with the other members of the ICCA steering committee, was awarded by the Israeli Knesset for her commitment in the fight against anti-Semitism.

### **M.K. Yohanan Plesner**

Yohanan Plesner is an Israeli politician and a member of the Knesset for Kadima. Born in England, Plesner served with the Sayeret Matkal during his national service in the IDF between 1989 and 1994. He went on to study at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he gained a BA in economics. He moved on to the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where he gained an MA in political economics and security studies. Returning to Israel, he worked as head of special projects in the Prime Minister's office under Ariel Sharon, and as a personal aide to the president of the Israeli

Institute for Democracy. He became Kadima's director general in May 2006 and entered the Knesset in October 2007.

### **M.K. Reuven Rivlin**

Reuven Rivlin was born in Jerusalem in 1939. A lawyer by profession, he holds a law degree from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Rivlin served as Legal Adviser, Chairman and team manager of the Betar Jerusalem Sports Association. He was a member of the Jerusalem Municipal Council and a member of the El Al Executive Council. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Khan Theater and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. He served as Chairman of the Likud Organization and as Chairman of the Jerusalem Branch of the Herut Movement.

Reuven Rivlin has been a Knesset Member since 1988, serving on the following Knesset committees: Foreign Affairs and Defense; Constitution, Law and Justice; State Control; Anti-Drug Abuse; Education and Culture; Ethics; Finance; House; and Advancement of the Status of Women. He also was a member of the Committee for Appointing Judges; the Committee for the Examination of the Maccabia Bridge Disaster; the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee on the Continuing Financial Crisis of the Local Governments; and the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee on Violence in Sports.

Reuven Rivlin served as Minister of Communications from March 2001 until February 2003. He served as Speaker of the 16th Knesset from February 2003 until March 2006. In March 2009 he was selected once again to serve as Speaker of the 18th Knesset.

### **M.K. Gideon Sa'ar**

Gideon Sa'ar was born in Tel Aviv in 1966. He holds a B.A. in Political Science and an LLB from Tel Aviv University. Sa'ar served as Aide to the Attorney-General (1995-1997), Aide to the State Attorney (1997-1998), and Secretary to the Government (1999, 2001-2002). Elected to the Knesset in 2003, he has served as Likud Parliamentary Group Chairman and an active lobbyist. He was a member of the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, the House Committee, the Committee for Immigration, Absorption, and Diaspora Affairs, and as Chairman of the Committee on the Status of Women. In the 17th Knesset (2006-2009) he also served as Deputy Speaker of the Knesset. Gideon Sa'ar was appointed Minister of Education in March 2009.

### **Mr. D.J. Schneeweiss**

D.J. Schneeweiss was born in Sydney, Australia in 1964 and immigrated to Israel in 1987. After joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1994 he served as Policy Assistant to Foreign Ministers Ehud Barak (1995-1996) and David Levy (1996-1998). D.J. served as Press Secretary at Israel's London Embassy from 1998-2002, during which time he was recognized by Diplomat magazine as the most effective Embassy spokesman in London. From 2003–2006 DJ served as Policy Advisor to Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom and from 2006-2009 as Israel's Deputy Ambassador to China. D.J. is currently responsible for

coordinating MFA strategy and action to counter boycott initiatives and related challenges to Israel.

### **Mr. Udi Segal**

Chief diplomatic correspondent for Channel 2 television.

### **M.K. Nahman Shai**

Nahman Shai is an Israeli journalist and politician who currently serves as a member of the Knesset for Kadima. He previously worked as the IDF spokesman.

Born in Mevaseret Zion, Shai gained a BA in history and political science and an MA in communications from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he also studied in the School of Business Administration. He studied communications at the World Press Institute in Minnesota, and worked as a research fellow in the Shorenstein Center in the JFK School of Government at Harvard University.

He served as the IDF spokesman between 1988 and 1991, reaching the rank of Brigadier-General.

In 1979 he became press secretary for the Israeli delegation to the United Nations in New York, and in 1981 he was named press consultant to Israel's Washington embassy. In 1991 he founded The Second Authority for Television and Radio and served as its CEO. He was also chairman of the board of directors of the Israel Television News Company, chairman of the Israel Broadcasting Authority (IBA) and Director General of the Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport. He later served as Senior Vice-President of United Jewish Communities (UJC ) and Director-General of UJC Israel.

### **Mr. Noam Shalit**

Noam Shalit is the father of abducted Israeli Soldier Gilad Shalit who has been held captive for 5 years.

### **M.K. Meir Sheetrit**

Meir Sheetrit was born in 1948 in Morocco and immigrated to Israel in 1957. He holds an MA in Political Science from Bar-Ilan University. He served in the IDF, with the rank of captain. Meir Sheetrit was Mayor of Yavneh (1974-87) and as Treasurer of the Jewish Agency (1988-92). He is a member of the Board of Ben-Gurion University, the Open University and Bar-Ilan University. He is the recipient of several awards, including the Local Government Prize, the Knesset Tolerance Shield and the President's Voluntarism award.

Meir Sheerit was first elected to the 10th Knesset in 1981. He has served on the Education & Culture Committee; Constitution, Law & Justice Committee; Finance Committee; House Committee; Committee on the Status of Women; and the Anti-Drug Abuse Committee. He also served as Chairman of the Israel-Korea Parliamentary Friendship League. He served as Minister of Finance from February-July 1999 and as Minister of Justice from March 2001 until February 2003. He served as Minister without Portfolio in the Finance Ministry from February 2003 until July 2004, when he was appointed Acting Minister of Transportation and Road Safety, officially receiving the portfolio in August 2004. In January 2006 he was also appointed Minister of Education, Culture and Sport, serving until May 2006. He also served as Minister of Housing and Construction from May 2006 until July 2007, when he was appointed Minister of the Interior, serving in this position until March 2009.

### **M.K. Moshe Ya'alon**

Moshe Ya'alon was born in 1950 in Kiryat Haim. He was drafted into the IDF in 1968 and to become deputy commander of the IDF Paratroop Brigade. In 1986, Ya'alon left to pursue advanced studies at the command and staff college in Camberly, England. In 1989-90, he retrained in the IDF Armored Corps and completed a BA in Political Science at the University of Haifa. In February 1990, he was appointed commander of the IDF Paratroop Brigade. In January 1992, he was appointed OC Judea and Samaria and promoted to the rank of brigadier-general. In August 1993, Ya'alon was appointed commander of the ground forces training facility at Tze'elim and commander of an armored division. In June 1995, he was appointed OC Intelligence and promoted to the rank of major-general. In May 1998, he was appointed OC Central Command. On September 15, 2000, he was appointed IDF Deputy Chief-of-Staff. On July 9, 2002, Moshe Ya'alon was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-General and served as the 17th IDF Chief-of-Staff until June 1, 2005. In February 2009, he was elected to the 18th Knesset on the Likud list. In March 2009 he was appointed Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Strategic Affairs.