



חברה משותפת مجتمع مشترك Shared Society

גבעת חביבה גבעת חביבה Givat Haviva

The Forth Annual Givat Haviva Conference
for a Shared Society in Israel

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Acknowledgements

Givat Haviva expresses its deep appreciation to the supporters of the Fourth Annual Givat Haviva Shared Society Conference.



The ALAN B. SLIFKA
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On May 24, 2016 prominent leaders and representatives from civil society, government, and the private sector from Israel and around the world gathered for the Forth Annual Givat Haviva Conference – Development of a Joint Vision for a Shared Society in Israel.

This booklet presents the conference's highlights and recommendations.

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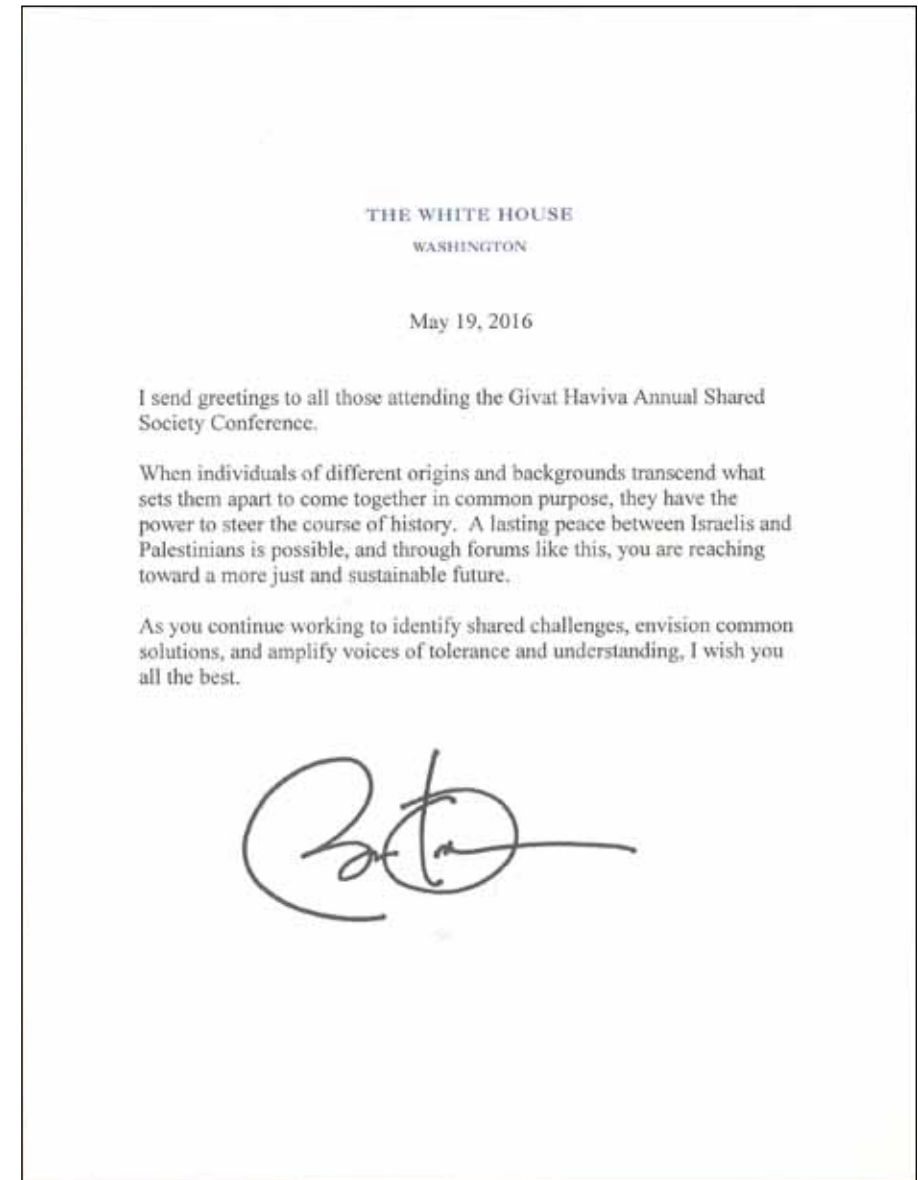
Mr. Barack Obama President of the United States



I send greetings to all those attending the Givat Haviva Annual Shared Society Conference.

When individuals of different origins and backgrounds transcend what sets them apart to come together in common purpose, they have the power to steer the course of history. A lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians is possible, and through forums like this, you are reaching towards a more just and sustainable future.

As you continue working to identify shared challenges, envision common solutions, and amplify voices of tolerance and understanding, I wish you all the best.



Mr. Reuven Rivlin

President of the State of Israel



The challenge of coexistence,
Which I prefer to call
The challenge of establishing a partnership
Among all elements of Israeli society,
Is not only about Arab-Jewish relations.

But there is no doubt
That the relationship between Jews and
Arabs
Within the State of Israel
Is
At the core of the partnership challenge.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict
Is present,
And has a tangible effect
On what is happening
Between Jews and Arabs
Inside Israel.

The many years
And bitter attempts
To resolve
The Israeli-Palestinian conflict
Have all led to a single conclusion:
At the present point in time,
A chasm separates the parties,
A chasm of suspicion,
A chasm of mistrust.

Without trust,
It will be hard to take
Even a single step forward.

The main question
We need to ask
Is how to build trust,
And just how significant
Israeli Arabs are
In this so very important process
Of building trust.

To me, building trust between the parties
Is a substantial, major challenge
In which the relationship between Jews and
Arabs
In the State of Israel
Is of paramount importance.

If we succeed in establishing, here, at home,
A relationship of trust between Jews and
Arabs,
Maybe – and I emphasize – maybe,
We will be able to replicate the model
In Jewish-Arab relations
Throughout the whole Middle East.

This reality
Places a clear fact before us:
If we aspire to life,

Then rebuilding Arab-Jewish relations
Must be made a first priority,
Consciously,
Politically,
Publicly,
And in the media
In Israel.
Otherwise, we will ruin our future
And the future of our children.

This is a critical time
For relations between Jews and Arabs
In Israel.
A government decision
That allocates billions
To closing the gaps in Arab society
Is a landmark decision,
A blessed
And dramatic decision.
While on the other hand,
Tension between the societies continues to
rise,
And sometimes even boils over.
Time is pressing.
We do not have the privilege
Of leaving the job to our children.
We have to build solid foundations for them,
And adequate social infrastructure.
This laudable conference
Is a substantial part of that infrastructure.

I welcome you in honor of the conference,
And I wish for us all
That our children will be able to dream
together,
About a future of vision and hope.
We have a long way ahead of us,
But we must keep on moving forward,
Because we are not doomed –
But are destined –
To walk this path together.

Bless you.

Mr. Mahmoud Abbas Chairman of the Palestinian Authority



I am happy to be here with you today and to convey greetings from President Mahmoud Abbas and his blessings for a successful conference.

In the shadow of the stagnant peace process and the growing dangers that lie in wait for us all as a result of the Israeli administration's denial of the Palestinian people's right to freedom, independence and to build its state, we believe that the government of Israel must heed the voices of truth and justice and choose between peace and settlements, between security and occupation. Peace and settlements are two opposite lines that never meet. Building a bridge to peace and cooperation between the two nations is in your interest and in ours, as well as in the interest of the peoples of the region, and for the sake of the generations to come.

The settlements are the main obstacle to any progress in the peace process. If it wants peace, the Israeli administration must agree to the Arab peace initiative; implement the international resolutions on the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and its right to build its state within the borders of June 4, 1967, including East Jerusalem; completely cease all settlement activity in Jerusalem and in all Occupied Palestinian Territories; and solve the refugee problem on the basis of the international resolutions.

The Palestinian leadership welcomes all international efforts to bring peace, and

most recently – the French initiative, which is based on a two-state solution and setting a timetable for ending the occupation. The Palestinian leadership has also issued a warning against Israel's continuing anti-peace policy in the shadow of the continued expansion of settlements and deeper apartheid measures and denial of our legitimate and national rights.

Peace is the only way, and the best alternative, to guarantee security for everyone. Our choice to realize this alternative through the international resolutions and through pressure on the government of Israel to recognize our people's rights are consistent with the efforts of the Palestinian leadership to gain international recognition of the Palestinian state. Discontinuation of the acts of oppression and the apartheid policy and the barricades will not bring security but more extremism, and historical opportunities designed to bring just and lasting peace will be missed.

Israel's lack of compliance with the voice of truth, justice and peace, and its continuing denial of the national rights of the Palestinian people, are shattering the options for a peaceful outcome and for achieving a solution and permanent peace that the coming generations will inherit, safeguard and protect.

Dear guests,

We aspire to a just and lasting solution that will guarantee the rights of the Palestinian nation and will end the conflict.

The Arab peace initiative – which promises Israel the opportunity to earn the recognition of 57 Arab and Islamic countries in return for the end of the occupation of the Palestinian territories, withdrawal to the borders of June 4, 1967, a just solution to all issues in dispute such as Jerusalem, the refugees and the borders – is an opportunity that must be exploited by all those who seek peace.

We hope that common sense will prevail.

I thank all the voices of peace in Israel from the bottom of my heart. The voices that oppose the continued occupation and the hostile policy against the Palestinian people

and their legitimate rights. The time has come for the longest occupation in history to reach an end. Yes, the time has come for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, living in security and peace alongside the State of Israel.

We are reaching out in peace for two nations living side by side, for our people's national human rights, and we express our great esteem and admiration for the role that is being filled by the forces of peace in Israeli society.



Yaniv Sagee Executive Director, Givat Haviva



A week ago, for a moment, it seemed like a ray of light pierced the darkness. The prime minister and the leader of the opposition spoke together about a historic opportunity for peace that would justify a partnership between them. By the next day it was clear that the light was from the engine of the train of war and hate ... and we got a right-wing nationalist government.

In the choice between peace and war, between democracy and ethnocracy, in the choice between a politics of fear and a politics of hope, again and again my beloved country chooses the slippery slope that leads to ruin.

But we have not gathered here today for the sake of anger and wailing. We have gathered here to strengthen the construction, the partnership, the hope, the true light and not the false.

We have gathered together because we are connected partners in the society which is marching toward that slippery slope, but we are also working to prevent the crash and to create an alternative.

2500 years ago, the great Chinese philosopher Confucius said, "When a group of people are marching downhill, the last one is the highest." And we truly are heading downhill, but we are the last, who are in the highest place, which demands responsibility, a clear strategy, precise implementation,

belief in our way, and love. Yes, love.

Martin Luther King said, "Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend." While we in Israel speak with contempt of "lovers of Arabs", or of those who want to create partnership with "the Zoabis".

And I say – they who speak of Arabs flocking to the polls, and they who are not ready to live in partnership with the Arab citizens of Israel, and they who see love of Arabs as mistaken or a shortcoming; they are the ones who endanger our future, the future of our shared country, Israel.

And I have a small confession: I am a lover of Arabs.

I love Riad and Mohammad, my partners, from whom I learn something new every day. I love Samer and Anhar and Ghazal and Zakaria and Nasrin and Hassan and all my wonderful comrades here at Givat Haviva, with whom we are turning hate into friendship and love.

But I don't stop at love – I celebrate the opportunity to live together with Arabs. I celebrate the enriching cultural diversity, the opportunities for economic development, the food, and the music – some of which we'll hear later today. As President Rubi Rivlin said at the Givat Haviva Conference last year, "We are not doomed but destined to walk this road together."

In his last speech, a day before his assassination, Martin Luther King said: "Only in the darkness can you see the stars." Well now it is dark enough here, and indeed we can see the stars. The stars are many wonderful individuals and organizations from the civil society who are not willing to give up on a shared and equal society. They are our partners who do the holy work every single day. And the stars are also in the private sector, where they lay the rails for partnership, building an equal, connecting economy and providing the philanthropic support for the shared society. And the stars are also in the public sector – they are the mayors who build partnerships between neighboring communities. The stars sit in the Knesset and some are even in the government. They work as government officials in all the Ministries, and what they have in common is the understanding that the future of Israel depends on our success in creating a shared society here.

The first Arab deputy minister in an Israeli government was appointed in 1971. Eight years earlier he was a partner in the founding of the first Jewish-Arab center in Israel, here at Givat Haviva. He was an MK from Mapam, and his name was Abd el-Aziz el-Zoubi. We are familiar with his famous saying: "My conflict as an Israeli-Arab stems from the fact that my people is at war with my country."

As long as the cycle of violence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues, as long as the terrible occupation continues to destroy Israel, the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel will continue to be torn between their country and their people. And yet these are my partners in building our shared society.

Together we do not give in to practices of war, hatred, and exclusion. Instead, we create the practices of a shared society based on equality.

We do this through long and deep connections between neighboring



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Yaniv Sagee Executive Director, Givat Haviva



municipalities, that produce municipal, communal, and educational partnerships.

We do this by creating a perennial, multi-aged educational process that can overcome the almost total separation between Arab and Jewish children in Israel. We do this through programs that build the basis for equality and integration, and we do this through teaching the Hebrew language to Arabs and the Arabic language to Jews.

Thousands of seeds are planted each year in human hearts. Strong and durable seeds that will be absorbed into the hard soil of fear and hatred which is ploughed by yesterday's politicians.

These seeds sprout seedlings that grow into green trees, providing shade for the growth of the leaders of tomorrow.

And if you think these are fantasies, or delusions, let me tell you that we also measure and evaluate all of our programs and see the successes up close, just as we learn from our failures how to improve. Yes, we are improving and expanding.

Therefore I am optimistic, and am not part of

those who wail and cry because of the dark. We are building a shared society day after day. We are building our common home, the home of the 100%, not only of the 80% national majority, where all the citizens feel at home, respect one another, are tolerant, are able to contain diversity, and share responsibility. A home where everybody feels a sense of belonging and of ownership. A society of equals as it was defined in the original vision for this country, the Declaration of Independence.

I am proud to conclude with a quote from the special greeting we received for this conference from President Obama. This is what he wrote: "When individuals of different origins and backgrounds transcend what sets them apart to come together in common purpose, they have the power to steer the course of history."

Let us all together steer the course of history, and bring new hope to the citizens of Israel.



Mohammad Darawshe

Director of Planning, Equality & Shared Society



A national minority is not a reality that is unique to Israel. And a national minority that is part of a nation that is involved in a conflict with its country is not a new reality. In Europe today, there are 23 national minorities that are recognized by the countries they live in, and they are granted collective rights, and there are arrangements as to their status. But all of this happened after those countries gained the insight that a modern state cannot be a system that belongs to just one nation, but that national minorities are part of their right to be called a state, and their right to be called democratic.

In Israel, we have not yet completed the pre-constitutional dialogue that is meant to lead to the regulation of Jewish-Arab relations in the country. It seems that the final formula will crystallize only after the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the region has been resolved.

But we cannot wait until that happens, because it may still take many years. Meanwhile there is life to be lived, a society to be built, and this requires the regulation of a great number of spheres in which respect there is no dispute. And achievements in these spheres must not be prevented, because small successes facilitate dialogue on those subjects that are disputed.

It is true that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is impeding the dialogue on a shared society between Jews and Arabs in the country, mainly because Jews and Arabs are fundamentally divided on the issue. Therefore, quickly resolving the conflict by establishing a Palestinian state will take the main sting out of Jewish-Arab relations. We will be free to build a shared, prosperous economy, a progressive, multicultural educational system and to share human and democratic values, some of which are being eroded every day.

The continued occupation must not be viewed as an issue that is extraneous to Jewish-Arab relations within Israel. It is a fundamental, moral and national issue. It must be put on the table, and the Arab public must be included in the process. Today, the Arab public in Israel is being harmed by the conflict in all aspects of life – economic marginalization, social marginalization, marginalization in the media, and exclusion from the decision-making process in the country. We Palestinian Arabs, citizens of Israel, have much to gain from the resolution of the conflict, and we must therefore demand our involvement in the process of its resolution. It is legitimate and essential that we take part in a just resolution of the conflict that will grant the right of self-determination and security to both nations.

We can form a connecting link that overcomes the dissension.





The recent refugee influx to Europe together with the effects of the financial crisis, austerity policies and globalization has the potential to change European societies domestically and beyond the nation state. The major challenge for policy makers in Europe and other societies will be to maintain social and political cohesion under these conditions. The future of liberal, tolerant and inclusive democracy will depend on the political action that will prevail given the rising right-wing populism and their tribal/ethnic politics, which always place some group of a society against others. However, we must strive to make democracy more resilient and more just, and thus build a defense against exclusionary politics.

I would therefore like to congratulate Givat Haviva for presenting a policy concept to us,

which gives a new and different perspective on how to overcome political, social and cultural inequality in our societies, and this policy concept is called **Shared Society**. The endorsements of two Presidents, President Obama and President Rivlin, as well as the participation of so many political leaders from all spheres of the Israeli society are a clear sign of the importance of such an approach in these challenging times. All of these leaders have recognized the main task they and the society are facing, namely to champion the importance of building shared societies and making the case for it – politically, ethically and economically.

Over 90% of the countries in the world today have a minority population of at least 10%. Israel is no exception. The reasons for this diversity vary. Sometimes it is the

result of migration; elsewhere it may be a consequence of colonization in the past. One needs to recognize that the particularities of each situation may differ, but I believe that there must be a common goal of finding ways in which members of different communities can live in harmony with each other.

All of us cherish and value a socially cohesive society: a stable society, safe and just, based on the promotion and protection of human rights, on non-discrimination and tolerance; a society that respects diversity, equality and opportunity, solidarity, security and participation of all people including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and individuals. In such a society all residents can feel at home and are able to make their contribution to the community. A society where these conditions exist, or where they are being actively and inclusively sought, is one that is called a “**shared society**.”

In order to work for a shared society we need to have a greater understanding of the benefits of social inclusion and the incentives and means to act in order to advance it. Practical experiences and academic research have identified the following basic principles that underlie a shared society: The **first principle** is the need for mutual respect for the dignity of each of the members of a society, even though they may speak different languages, may follow different religions and may look differently. Respect itself is built on

knowledge and understanding of the other and there is a need for creating positive opportunities to meet and know the other in order to build respect. In return, respect makes people aware of the needs of others and the ways in which their rights may be overlooked or ignored.

This leads to a **second and third principle**: equality of opportunity and the absence of discrimination. If these basic rights are guaranteed people are more secure and less likely to feel threatened by the state or by other sections of the community.

And **fourthly** only democratic participation is able to provide the best kind of structures and institutions for ensuring that all sections of the community are able to speak for themselves and express their needs.

These four principles are references that must be the basis for our work on and for social cohesion.

The nucleus of working for a shared society is the political leadership and the creation of political will to pursue an inclusionary policy. Political leaders are critical in determining if a society is inclusive and shared or if it excludes and marginalizes people and denies them opportunity. Political leadership is important for reassuring people and challenging those who appeal to and exploit the fears of communities who do not know each other well. Political leadership is required to



In order to work for a shared society we need to have a greater understanding of the benefits of social inclusion and the incentives and means to act in order to advance it.

Mr. Werner Puschra, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel



take initiatives and act in ways that show an inclusive approach. Political leadership is needed to make the argument that the society is a better place for everyone, if everyone embraces diversity, even if it is initially challenging.

Of course, political leaders cannot achieve all this on their own. All sections of society have to play a part in it. There are many examples of civil society groups working to improve community relations and bringing marginalized sections of the population into the mainstream, and many of you are taking part in these efforts. But those efforts will be limited, if the political leadership is not supportive. In many societies we find that it is not sufficiently supportive, and in these cases we need to look at why this is the case and how it can be changed.

We also need to look at how international bodies can work with and support leaders in recognizing the importance of this approach. We want to show that it is possible to promote shared societies everywhere, even where leaders argue there is nothing they can do about it.

So far, I have outlined that social inclusion makes sense for ethical and political reasons. This alone should be convincing enough. Nevertheless, there is also an economic argument for social inclusion that seems obvious, but is often not taken into consideration. If sections of society are

marginalized, they will contribute less to the economy. They will have poorer education and limited skills to contribute. They have less capital to invest. Recent studies by World Bank economists suggest that the countries in the top quintile of "inclusive" societies have seen their GDP rise over the past ten years a total of 18.6% more than the countries in the bottom quintile. That means, there is evidence that social inclusion pays off even in terms of higher economic growth.

Excluded groups may also be less willing to contribute to a society which they feel does not respect them and treat them as full citizens. They may go further and resist the status quo and it may cost the state a good deal of its resources to maintain security and stability. The state may resort to increased security measures, such as enlarged security forces, enhanced equipment for the security services, larger and stronger prisons. But it comes at an additional economic price: Domestic and even more so foreign capital is unlikely to invest in a society, if it seems unstable and tensions are high.

It should be clear to everyone by now, that marginalized and vulnerable groups are **not** a drain on the economy, particularly in a world that has faced financial meltdown and with continued high unemployment, where people feel even more insecure. Rather, their inclusion creates new opportunities for them and the society and raises welfare levels for everyone.

It is important to have these types of information and analysis at hand and to refute the negative arguments against inclusion. But this will not be enough. Nationalistic populism and politics based on identities can easily touch the uncertainty that many citizens feel about those being different from themselves, particularly the poor and disadvantaged. We have seen this only too clearly in recent elections in a number of European countries, including my own, Germany. In such a situation it is difficult for rational arguments to be heard, but even more important to repeatedly say them over and over again.

Especially in such a critical situation it is of utmost importance to stress that diverse societies which are cohesive and inclusive make economic sense: co-operation is better than conflict. It is more cost effective and beneficial in every way to invest in building shared societies. This is the argument political leaders should focus on and exercise political leadership.

But political leaders cannot replace the contribution of individuals in their own communities and the work of international and civil society organizations. Political leadership often needs to be "enabling leadership" which encourages or makes it possible for attitudes and behaviors to change and for communities to act. What I said about political leaders is also relevant to those in leadership positions in civil society.

One final word:

Social inclusion is about all of us. It is about each one of us individually, as citizens, as bearers of Human Rights. It is not about "fitting the others in," but about building common ground where all of us feel safe to develop our potential and contribute with our differences.

Thank you!



Mark Gallagher

Head of Political Section of European Union Delegation to Israel



It is a great pleasure for me to be with you all today. I would like to thank Givat Haviva for the invitation to this important conference. Looking around, I can see that there are many important people who are committed to a shared and democratic society in Israel.

The challenges facing multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural societies are well known to Europe. And I believe we have a lot to learn from each other in this field.

But in Israel, the issue of shared society also can be seen a building block in the bigger picture that needs to be addressed. It can provide some necessary reconciliation skills and tools, which are much needed.

For this reason, we are supporting Givat Haviva in its very important work of bring Jewish and Arab Israelis together to create a common vision of the future and an action plan to work towards this shared society. This project is funded under the EU Peacebuilding Initiative, which supports projects which contribute to a resolution of the conflict.

Just as in Europe, Israel has a multi-layered society within a complex historical and political context, and an ongoing conflict.

Europe's history and the creation of a unified structure of Union itself is a result of many years of national conflicts and serves as a model for the resolution of these conflicts. And even today's pressing issues in Europe, including the influx of thousands of refugees

arriving from war-torn countries, remind us that conflicts create challenges and also opportunities to pursue our vision of the future.

We appreciate that Israel is a place where, despite many great difficulties, this kind of forward thinking, and joint responsibility for the future of the country can take place, and have so many people from all communities, as well as the government, come out today to support it.

This is no small task.

Many seem to agree that, while there is equality before the law, important social, economic and political divides remain between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority. These divides are palpable in employment and housing statistics, but also in recent public opinion polls, about Jewish and Arab attitudes towards each other. There has also been a worrying tide of racist and nationalist crimes; and it is up to the authorities to demonstrate that they effectively prosecute such crimes, and for communities to address the incitement that comes from within.

Many important efforts have been devoted to addressing the gaps between Jews and Arabs in Israel, a lot of them supported by the EU or EU Member States. As much as it is important to build interpersonal ties, to work on mutual understanding of "the other", and to promote relations between communities, it

is also vital to address structural inequalities. Enhancing Arab participation in the labour market, and the empowerment of women can boost economic development. Equitable land allocation and urban planning is key to allow legal development of housing and business. Arab participation in higher education and in civil service employment can contribute to social cohesion. Inter-community violence, including so-called honour killing must be prevented and citizens need to feel safe and protected, as well as have trust in the legal and justice systems. Democracy cannot flourish where there is no trust in public systems and institutions.

To this end, the EU has supported many projects in Israel which address these inequalities, and where people work together, Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, towards a better future for all.

My impression over the past few years is one of loss of hope and growing despair about the future. It is up to the leadership to bring about a fundamental change to bring back hope to its citizens, but also to the countries and communities around Israel, supporting Israel and wishing to see it moving in a positive direction together with its neighbours.

We are aware that the current insecurities and conflict in the region do not assist in this mission. And we don't always have the

answers, but we do know what won't help. Incitement, hate speech, creating or widening divides between communities, revenge and lack of forward thinking – all these things don't work.

In this regard, the EU has been worried at times about some initiatives that would limit fundamental freedoms or legalise discrimination. So far, none of the most troubling bills have actually become law. But they already had a chilling effect on the atmosphere and can contribute to the feeling of alienation. We expect the government to firmly oppose any potentially discriminatory action and to take a strong position against hate speech. We also call on leaders of the Arab community in Israel to pass the kind of responsible messages that can help heal the gulf in trust between Jewish and Arab communities

Therefore, I am glad to see here today government officials, Members of Knesset and community leaders. I think it is particularly commendable that you are planning to come up with a set of concrete actions to move this project forward and create a shared society and space for all the people of Israel to flourish and look into the future with hope. Together, you can make a difference. I wish you constructive debates, creative ideas and the tenacity needed to implement them.

Mohammad Barakeh

Chair of the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens in Israel



I want to congratulate Givat Haviva on organizing this conference, which creates the opportunity for a direct dialogue on one of the most important issues in Jewish-Arab relations. No one other than the Follow-Up Committee is able to speak for the one and a half million Arabs in Israeli society. It would be a good idea for the country to give thought to whether Israeli Arabs should be treated as a society with rights and recognize the Follow-Up Committee as a representative body.

In recent years the “shock factor” has diminished: in ‘82, two Palestinians were murdered in Halhul, and as students, we went out into the streets and demonstrated until they dispersed us with tear gas; today, much bigger things happen and pass over quietly, without protest. The question that needs to be asked is the question of equal citizenship and not of shared citizenship. There is nothing that touches on the citizenship of Arabs in Israel that does not touch on the “conflict”, which is a pale version of the Nakba disaster that befell the Arabs in ‘48. There is nothing about Arab society that can’t be traced back to ‘48. The “emergency regulations” imposed a curfew on Arab society: that was the first thing that established the unequal and unshared citizenship. Even after the end of the military regime the problems have continued: the housing issue (which is connected to national land, and we are outside the nation), the poverty issue, even the high road accident rates are because people work harder and the infrastructure is not as good. The issue of crime and guns in the criminal organizations in Netanya is being handled differently than the way it is being dealt with in Arab society. I called for an operation to “clean up our homes” so all citizens would rid their homes of guns, crime, because I have despaired of the possibility that the state will deal with the issue properly. How can people live, for years and years, with this situation, such discrimination? And now Liberman joins the government. The man who conducted four election campaigns on the backs of Israel’s Arab citizens. What does the “issue of loyalty” mean? I don’t have to be loyal to the state; the state has to be loyal to me. Only a fascist country demands the loyalty of its citizens. My right as a Palestinian should be recognized when I stand alongside my people, the Palestinians: we simply cannot be perceived as a fifth column. The Nakba is with us in our everyday lives. If someone commits a crime he must be tried and punished by the judicial and penal mechanisms in the country; but the issue of citizenship is worrying: there’s writing on the wall, and it says “escalation” not only in the Gaza Strip, but also against the Arab citizens of Israel as Liberman joins the government. We can’t live our everyday lives the way we have been. We are headed for disaster and I call on everyone to raise their voice.

In order not to end on a pessimistic note: in the Follow-Up Committee we have been talking about the need for opening a direct communication channel between Arab and Jewish citizens. The lack of contact is deepening the alienation. Disagreement can also be discussed. The Arab population has reached out, and I challenge the Jewish population to reach out in return.



MK Isaac Herzog Opposition leader



When I negotiated with Netanyahu over leading a significant political move I did it wholeheartedly, although it was annoying: I had the feeling that there were genuine opportunities in the region. There is a group of new Arab leaders, Sunnis, around us, who are willing to assume responsibility. As opposed to Camp David, where Barak and Arafat were alone, here there is an opportunity for a protective layer that views the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as part of their policy. I reached the conclusion that there was a great opportunity here, and all of the forces in Israel were necessary to make this move a reality. If it would have happened, we would have been looking at an important international event in Cairo. I thought that Netanyahu was ready for a major move in the face of world political elements, but for him the political interest prevailed and he went with extremist leaders. He gave in to his basic fears about the continued ability to rule the Likud. Moshe Sharet had an opportunity to further peace with Egypt in 1953, but because of a political conjuncture in Mapai the move was prevented. Now too, political conjunctures have prevented the move. History will judge Netanyahu harshly.

That is from without. From within, Liberman's appointment will have an impact on relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel, and I would suggest hearing what the Arab citizens have to say. Even when he was in the opposition Liberman voted with the coalition on all kinds of racist laws. He will lead a dangerous agenda in the country. This is a challenging time in relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel. When 50% of the Jews don't want an Arab teacher teaching their children, I find it shocking. The Prime Minister does nothing on the subject, and it's worrying. As for my statement about "Arab lovers", I made it while referring to an issue that was raised by an activist who had used the term before me. I should not have used this term. There is a silent majority that acknowledges a shared life and supports it, but the conflict with the Palestinians is disruptive and even confuses the issue. I also want to define boundaries: whoever wants to hurt soldiers is a terrorist, period. I have children in the army. And that is why I contested the words of our MK Zouheir Bahloul on the subject. The Arab leadership also needs to grow up and not hang on to the statement "We won't join a Zionist government". If my party was forming the government I would want to include the leadership of the Joint List, but the Arab leadership isn't interested in this. Both sides have to overcome their complexes as far as collaboration on all levels in the country is concerned.

MK Ayman Odeh Joint List leader



A process of radicalization is taking place in the Israeli public space, and that is why we must all rid ourselves of the concept "all Arabs against all Jews" and replace it with "Arabs and Jews together for equality and a better society". There is the right-wing camp, the left-wing camp, and this is the time to build the democratic camp – Jews and Arabs together.

As to the allegations about the need to strengthen Jewish self confidence: it is simply not possible that such a dominant majority group will behave like a minority. That's how the weak behave, not a majority. What is the privilege of being a majority and strong and behaving in this way? Leave it to us to feel like a minority and to feel weak – it's almost the only thing we have left. Who should feel threatened? The Palestinian child or the Jewish child? The Palestinians are the ones who should feel threatened, not the State of Israel.

Israeli Arabs are the ones who are between a rock and a hard place. We are in no doubt that the end of the occupation will strengthen and advance Arab society. The occupation is the barrier against the progress of Israeli Arabs.

"Don't bother us about the Palestinians", as we are often told, is an immoral statement. We take citizenship seriously, and this also includes concern for the Arabs.

The Joint List was created out of choice, and we want it to run together in the next elections. It has huge potential. In the last elections only 63% of Israeli Arabs with a right to vote voted, while among the Jews 74% voted. If the voter turnout grows we can reach 17 mandates and we will prevent a right-wing government from being formed. We have four parties and there is no doubt that we are divided on many issues, but we act democratically, certainly more than Yesh Atid does.

If you ask any Arab on the street what was the best period from the parliamentary aspect, the answer is during the Rabin government, when we were an obstructive bloc. Arab society wants influence, not to sit on the sidelines, even if we aren't in the coalition. An obstructive bloc is a good option, and there are other possibilities as well.

Mizrahi Jews know how to live with Arabs, but they are part of the right because Mapai humiliated their parents. Culturally, we are so close. The Mizrahis are Arabs, so why are we so far apart?

We want to influence, but it isn't up to us alone. It's important to me to be up there on every platform and talk to the Israeli public. I speak to all citizens, and it's important to me that my words reach everyone, so that at least 30% will say, "We don't quite agree, but there's a certain logic to what he says".

Itamar Shviky Director of the Havatzelet Group



I am happy and excited to be standing here today and to welcome you to the Fourth Givat Haviva Annual Shared Society Conference. We at Havatzelet Group are happy and proud to be part of an important, key enterprise in Israeli society such as Givat Haviva, and I want to thank you, my friends from Givat Haviva, for letting us be your partners.

At a time when Israel is drifting further towards extremism in almost every sphere, when social processes and trends should cause each one of us concern; a time of greater extremism in social discourse, greater extremism in the media and social media; greater extremism in the attitude to minorities; greater extremism and the broadening of social gaps faced by weakened populations, Holocaust survivors and even among our children.

These gaps are becoming impossible. Gaps in education, in health and in the economy. A country that is becoming less and less democratic, where public officials and army officers cannot speak their minds, a country whose leaders not only do nothing to stop the radicalization, but are the ones who are fanning the flames.

And amidst all this social chaos, Givat Haviva stands out like a beacon of sanity, a source of inspiration, a place where people dream, but also realize those dreams. A place of action, of optimism, because despite everything, here despair is not a way of life, and pessimism is

not part of the work plan.

In the past few years Givat Haviva has evolved to become the leading and most important center for a shared society in Israel and worldwide.

Givat Haviva is unique in its ability to look at society from a broad perspective, holistically, comprehensively, encompassing all its elements, and to identify and diagnose the problems and deliver a solution.

The need for a shared society or shared societies does not exist only in Israel, but everywhere in the world.

About a month ago, I had the opportunity to join my friend, Yaniv Sagee, Givat Haviva's CEO, on a visit to the US, where we met with people from a number of North America's leading universities. These universities are seeking to collaborate with Givat Haviva in a number of spheres and programs, and some are even looking into establishing branch campuses here at Givat Haviva.

This is the place to say that we have with us here friends from Rogers State University, one of the institutions we visited. I would like to thank them for their efforts to attend this conference.

Last week, Givat Haviva received the annual Constantiner Prize for Jewish Education from Tel Aviv University. The reasons for the award are proof that Tel Aviv University too

has identified the extensive, significant work that has been, and is being, done here at Givat Haviva.

In the next few years we plan to expand and develop activities at Givat Haviva into numerous, diverse spheres, and to position it as a world center for a shared society.

In closing, I would like to thank all my friends from Givat Haviva – you are people of exceptional vision, imagination and ability,

who seek to make a better life, a life that is more value based, decent and honest, in Israel and everywhere in the world

We at Havatzelet will do everything to help and support you, and mainly – not to get in your way.



Nir Meir

Secretary General of the Kibbutz Movement

Tectonic plates have been moving beneath the feet of the members of Israeli society. An evil spirit has pervaded the Israeli public, the spirit of racism, violence and incitement. For the next generation to feel comfortable enough to crystallize their approach – we must denounce all forms of expression and conduct that are tainted by racism, violence and incitement against groups and individuals in society. There are different nations here, and we must be able to live in dignity and accept the other, the different. We are the ones from whom the call must emanate: Enough. No more.



There are different nations here, and we must be able to live in dignity and accept the other, the different. We are the ones from whom the call must emanate: Enough. No more.

Nir Meir, Secretary General of the Kibbutz Movement



Deputy Minister Ayoob Kara



Q: Yesterday at the faction meeting in the Knesset the distribution of portfolios was discussed. You said that you felt that you didn't belong, that there was the smell of racism in the Likud.

A: I satisfy the criteria of seniority and loyalty more than many ministers from the Likud. I was prevented from attending government meetings as deputy minister and I was promised that at the first opportunity I would be appointed minister. And the promise is not being kept, and Netanyahu appoints Dichter and Hanegbi. I can see that they are trying to stop me from joining the government, and it's not because of the position. It isn't personal, it's a matter of principle that is related to racism, and that's why, at the Likud faction meeting in the Knesset on the distribution of portfolios, I said, "There's the smell of racism in the air".

I am part of the State of Israel and I will not waive my right to be equal among equals. I hope that Netanyahu's statement about the Arabs coming in droves to the ballot boxes was a slip of the tongue, a statement made carelessly, but I am no longer sure.



MK Ofer Shelah



Yesterday, the Knesset marked Herzl Day. Not a single Arab MK was present. I expect, in the context of the self confidence we must display as Jews, I expect the same confidence among the Arab leadership as well, which accepts the state. I would expect the Arab MKs to be there, to speak on Herzl Day.

In the fabric of the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel, there is a growing rift between the furtherance of equality and the political rhetoric, which aims to take advantage of the lowest common denominator – fear – to connect people. The common denominator that embraces fear is growing and is creating even more polarization – among the coalition and opposition alike.

Are Arab MKs in the government legitimate? To my regret, we haven't yet reached the place where this could be part of the discourse. I led the Recruitment Law in the last government. In this law, Liberman demanded national service or civil service as an obligation. I didn't agree to it being an "obligation" because we aren't mature enough for that yet. The enlargement of national service in Israel was discussed. There is a demand for national service, but the leaders of the shared society are against this demand. I also see good depth trends, although in the political fractiousness this hasn't been expressed. But we Jews need to feel more confident in our identity and stop attacking the "other".

I am against unilateral steps such as disengagement from the Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem, which are interpreted merely as our surrender to the opposition of the other side. We will take action to make it clearly understood that the separation is vital to a Jewish and democratic state in Israel. This is Yesh Atid's political platform, as also defined by Yair Lapid. This separation will also help in the renewed self definition of who the Arab citizen of the State of Israel is. The moment that there is a settlement between us and his people across the border, we can achieve a profound dialogue. In a country with a Jewish majority there will be a fitting place for Arabs.

