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An Israeli-Palestinian Business Summit in Oxford

The Role of Economics and Business in Peacemaking is the title of a high-level conference of Israeli and Palestinian business leaders, which will take place at the *Saïd Business School*, University of Oxford, on Sunday February 13th 2011. The conference will bring views from leading business executives and senior officials - Israeli, Palestinian and British. Registration: 9-9.30am, conference: 9.30am-6pm, reception: 6pm-7pm. Admission is Free. For the full programme and registration: www.me-economy-oxford.org

Conference Advisory Board: Dr. Anna Sher (organiser), Sir Victor Blank, Shmuel Ben-Tovim, Ghanem Nuseibah, Dr. Pamela Hartigan, Prof. Colin Mayer.

The Palestinian representation will include Dr. Karim Nashashibi - Economic Advisor to PM Fayyad; Ousama Kanaan – IMF Mission Chief; Prince Firaz Raad of Tony Blair’s team; Dr. Mohammed Nuseibeh – Founder of Al Quds University; and Hanna Siniora.

Among the prominent Israeli and British speakers: Israel Makov, Nachman Shai MK, Gad Propper, Prof. Itamar Rabinowitz, Lord Stone, Naava Mashiach, Dan Carativas, Alon Roth-Snir, Toby Coppel, Eli Gonen, Shlomo Brom.

TLV Global City

The City of Tel Aviv-Yaffo has launched *TLV Global City*, a 10-year municipal and national initiative aimed at elevating the city's global positioning. The term Global City is commonly used to describe urban centres with significant importance in international financial, cultural and social activity.

As part of this initiative, the city seeks to leverage its current status as the leading business and financial centre in Israel into a more prominent centre globally. International financial institutions and corporations will be invited to take a look at the unique advantages of the city, such as highly skilled human resources, proximity to Central Europe, Sunday as a regular trading day, multicultural society and more. <http://www.tel-aviv.gov.il/english/GlobalCity.htm>

A very welcome kick-off to the new campaign was provided by Lonely Planet’s naming of Tel Aviv as one of 2011 hottest cities: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/usa/new-york-city/travel-tips-and-articles/76165>

ICT Business opportunities in the UK

Matthew Gould MBE, the British Ambassador to Israel, hosted a breakfast seminar on January 26th with the aim of inviting Israeli information and computer technology companies to look into new business opportunities in the UK. Among the speakers were Stylus Chairman & CEO Marc Worth, former Apax boss Stephen Grabiner, Saul Klein of Index Ventures and Alon Aginsky, CEO of the Israeli company Cvidya, which employs over 150 people in Cardiff. Highlighted potential spaces for Israeli entrepreneurs included the public sector, health, retail and cellular technologies. The event was co-sponsored by UKTI, Israel Export Institute and British-Israel Chamber of Commerce.

UK-Israel.com - New website and 2011 Directory

The Directory of UK-Israel Business Services was published for the first time last year to an enthusiastic welcome by business people and professionals in both countries. An extended and completely bi-lingual 2011 print edition is due on May 2011. It is preceded by a new dedicated website- www.uk-isarel.com , already on air with the last (Hebrew only) edition materials.

To be included in the new edition, to offer editorial contributions and for further information please contact the publisher Ms. Inbal Peleg paprika.pro@gmail.com

The high-tech pilgrimage to Israel goes on. Now the Swedish

The bestseller *Start-Up Nation*, by Dan Senor and Saul Singer, has created an even increased global interest in the Israeli high-tech miracle. The latest to pay respect were members of the Swedish steering committee of *Innovation for growth* project. They included Marcus Wallenberg, Chairman of SEB; Kristina Alsér, Governor of Kronoberg County; Lars Backsell, Chairman of Recipharm; and senior officials from the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications. They have called on, among others, President Shimon Peres, Director-General of the Ministry of Finance Haim Shani and leaders of the High Tech Industries Association of Israel.

The Lord Mayor of the city of London to visit Israel

Alderman Michael Bear, Lord Mayor of the City of London, will visit Israel and the Palestinian Territories on 24-27 May 2011. The visit has been scheduled after consultation with City businesses, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and UK Trade and Investment. The Lord Mayor will be accompanied by a senior business delegation. The purpose is to encourage more Israeli economies to raise capital in London and to open up new markets for City businesses.

The programme of the Lord Mayor in Israel will include a business seminar in Tel-Aviv, Israel's financial centre, and the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

The last visit of a Lord Mayor to Israel took place on January 2008, when Sir David Lewis was in office.

Business roundtable: Arab private sector in Israel

A Roundtable of Israeli Jewish and Arab private sector leaders in Ramat Gan was part of January's study trip by the *UK Task Force on Issues Facing Arab Citizens of Israel*. Among the presenters were Habib Hazzan, a co-founder of Al Badwar private equity fund; Inas Said, CEO of Galil Software; and Jafar Sabbah, CEO of Rad Dental Devices. Trevor Pears, who led the study trip, was joined by Lord Beecham, Lucian Hudson, Marc Worth, Mike and Stephen Grabiner, Charles Keidan, Daniel Seal and Task Force Director Dr. Alice Wood.

The event addressed current trends in the Arab private sector and Jewish-Arab collaborative ventures. Areas of synergies were identified, as well as opportunities for increased British engagement by trade and investments.

Market Watch: Is the Holy Land short of angels?

Israel's venture capital funds industry, by far the largest in Europe, has experienced one of its disappointing periods during the last two years, following the eruption of the global financial crisis in 2008. While the deal flow from the thriving start-up culture never stopped, financial resources to support them have been dwindling due to a much slower influx of new investments into the VC's. Among the most affected are start-ups which "graduate" annually from the successful incubator system. They find it more difficult than ever to finance the essential next steps of their evolution.

Some relief is found by angel early-stage investments, mostly by Israeli high-worth individuals and a handful of angel groups. The space is wide open for more involvement by experienced international angel investors who would find a wide array of young companies and entrepreneurs to invest in.

If you wish to further explore early-stage investments in Israel, please contact me.

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