

From a press release issued by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs; www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/

Progress reported at Israel-Vatican bilateral talks

28 May 2008

The Plenary meeting of the Commission accomplished significant progress in the on-going negotiations between Israel and the Holy See.



Israel Foreign Ministry Director General Abramovich and Under-Secretary for Relations with State at the Secretariat of State Parolin

Joint Communiqué

The Bilateral Permanent Working Commission between the State of Israel and the Holy See has held a Plenary meeting at the Vatican today, Wednesday, 28 May 2008, for the purpose of advancing the negotiations pursuant to Article 10 §2 of the [Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel](#) (30 December 1993).

The Delegation of the Holy See was led by Monsignor Pietro Parolin, Under-Secretary for Relations with States at the Secretariat of State, and was composed also of the following Members:

- H.E. Archbishop Antonio Maria Vegliò, Secretary of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches;
- H.E. Archbishop Antonio Franco, Apostolic Nuncio in Israel, Chairman of the Commission at the “Working Level”;
- H.E. Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo;
- Msgr. Maher ‘Abboud, Archimandrite;
- Msgr. Franco Coppola, Secretariat of State;
- Father David-Maria A. Jaeger, OFM, Legal Adviser;
- Mr. Henry Amoroso, Second Legal Adviser;
- Father Giovanni Caputa, SDB, Secretary.

The Delegation of the State of Israel was led by Mr. Aaron Abramovich, Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and was composed also of the following

Members:

- Mr. Mordechai Lewy, Ambassador of the State of Israel to the Holy See;
- Mr. Shmuel Ben-Shmuel, Head of World Jewish and Inter-religious Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Oded Brook, Senior Deputy Director of the Ministry of Finance;
- Mr. Moshe Golan, Director, Civil Affairs, State Attorney's Office;
- Adv. Ronen Gil-Or, Director, General Law Department, MFA;
- Mr. Bahij Mansour, Director of Inter-religious Affairs Department, MFA;
- Adv. Yael Weiner, Director, International Civil Affairs, Ministry of Justice;
- Mr. Eliav Benjamin, Advisor to the Director General.

The work of this Plenary meeting of the Commission took place in a climate of great cordiality and good will, and accomplished significant progress towards the shared goal, both substantively and in terms of putting in place procedures to improve desired effectiveness of the on-going negotiations.

The next meeting of the Plenary will take place during the first half of December this year, in Israel, and, in the meantime, the Commission will continue its task at the "working level".

Vatican City, 28 May 2008, 23 Iyar 5768