

# ISRAEL GATEWAY

ISRAEL'S FOREIGN TRADE MAGAZINE DECEMBER 2009

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**This** year, the Globus Gate Group is continuing its tradition of promoting cooperation between countries around the world and Israel's business community. This time, however, we decided to use the Israel Gateway 7th Israel Foreign Trade Conference to focus on the role and function of the metropolitan area in global business.

Over the years, we have become accustomed to viewing the world as being composed of nations but ultimately discover that it is essentially one small global village. In this global network, every nation is composed of many facets. Citizens of these countries like to focus mainly on their immediate environment. An examination of this environment, and particularly the urban environment, reveals that it contains numerous functions. Cities are home to moderate-sized and small businesses, hotels, industrial and commercial zones that serve as the basis of the economy, and are gradually becoming a focal point for international trade.

An observation of our environment reveals an entire plethora of opportunities in the city but when we look at our lives in the city, we discover the importance of a good, clean environment with convenient access to services we need on a regular basis. We learn how traffic and transportation problems affect us and how important personal safety is.

In the search to promote international relations, I discovered another platform that is equally as important and one that can be a satisfactory substitute, as evidenced by sister city agreements that enable the parties to that agreement to benefit from cultural, educational, economic and commercial cooperation.


The concept of a Safe City has recently been raised. Urbanization creates polarization between the outskirts of the city and business centers, leading to increased crime and injury of innocent people. Although the safe city concept has been implemented around the world, it only recently arrived in Israel. Each city characterizes itself and solves its problems in the way it sees fit. What is shared by all safe cities is innovative, smart technology that was developed for this purpose. The safe city concept essentially unifies all nations and is an idea shared by them. We hope to use this conference to establish and study the concept of the city and the metropolitan area, as well as make it a tradition.



I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the participants and guests to the IsraelGateway 7th Israel Foreign Trade Conference, to which we decided to invite the international committee for SafeCity solutions. We hope to sow the seeds for a better future and improve the current situation, both in our own country and around the world, while incorporating Israeli technologies, a source of pride for this country.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to helping make this vision a reality.

**Sincerely,**  
**Oded Kapitolnik**

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# Security Architects

The Mer Group, headed by owner Haim Mer, which also includes Athena Security Implementations, provides a complete solution for city security. The group **establishes safe cities**. Whereas Athena, headed by Shabtai Shavit, provides security consultations and tailors security solutions to meet specific needs of each city, Mer provides the systems with the suitable technology

By: Tal Aharony

**Imagine** a city in which state-of-the-art sensors detect thieves trying to break into your home, cameras record the license plate number of a car trying to rob a bank and experienced switchboard operators handle every resident request online. This city has a superior intelligence system, a skilled and trained professional team as well as citizens who live in peace and security, free of any fear and concern. No, this is not a city on another planet but rather a concept known as the 'safe city', which has become increasingly popular in Israel as well as around the world.

The Mer Group, an international group that includes numerous subsidiaries, establishes these types of safe cities around the world. The company, which is traded on the TASE (under CMER), is involved in a myriad of projects, ranging from infrastructure, cellular installation and provision of complete telecommunications and security solutions.

Vice President of Business Development in the Mer Group **Avi Yariv** says that the group incorporates a wide range of overall abilities, inter alia, planning, integration, establishment, installation, development, production, support and maintenance. Yariv: "The Mer Group, which employs 1200 people in over 40 countries, operates in several divisions in a range of areas,

including wireless communication - wireless infrastructure and professional services; systems - security systems and military communication systems, broadband communication - product supply, installation, maintenance and provision of transmission networks. The Mer Group operates in Israel as well as in many other countries, including Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Peru, Venezuela, Africa and the US. Regarding Homeland Security, operations change based on the country and its specific needs. Although everyone defines Homeland Security differently, it primarily involves airports, energy facilities, maritime facilities, train systems, nationally sensitive sites, government sites (such as Israel Knesset), etc."

Company subsidiaries include **Mer Telecom** - which sets up cellular networks around the world, **Rotal Co.** - which provides telecommunication (broadband) services and is a service provider for many cell companies, **Mer Systems** - which is primarily involved in security, defense and Homeland Security, as well as **Athena** - which provides defense consultations.

## Real Time

In the defense sector, and particularly in all aspects related to safe cities, the chief cooperation takes place between Mer Systems and Athena.

**Shabtai Shavit**, founder and CEO of Athena (currently a Mer Group subsidiary), established the company in 2001 following the September 11th attacks. Shavit: "One of the first insights I had following these terrorist attacks was that defense, security and safety, which had been to then optional, has become a MUST, for both government and private sectors. In retrospect, it turns out that I was right. People today are willing to give up some of their privacy in favor of personal security, particularly when they are convinced of genuine security needs in their own town, and they expect that this will provide added benefits to them in the future as well."

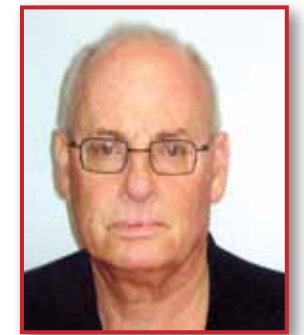
Safe cities not only provide security but also generate economic growth. When there is no need to be constantly concerned about personal safety, that energy can be directed to other areas, such as more effective transportation systems, improved personnel in the city, new communications systems, etc. Many cities around the world today are defined as safe cities (e.g. in the US, Brazil, Philippines, etc.) and even middle and upper class neighborhoods are defined as safe neighborhoods (financed by neighborhood residents). In these cities and neighborhoods, all of the necessary equipment has been installed to make the city safe - various types of sensors, cameras that film 24/7, infrared cameras,



Avi Yariv



Shabtai Shavit



Haim Mer

cameras with sensors, cameras with audio, sensors that can detect chemicals, sensors that can identify noise as well as many other technologies that are designed to ensure all aspects of city safety.

## How did the safe city concept develop?

**Shavit:** "The definition of a safe city is essentially an expansion of the control and command concept that, following 11.9, has become one of the most important issues in the Western world. Until these attacks, the concept of control and command primarily applied to the military, which uses force and must control with force through intelligence it receives through control and command centers. When global terror reared its ugly head, and civilian society found itself at the forefront in the battle against terror, it needed new tools to cope with the new threats. Today's reality requires an overall strategy that provides a solution to the

unique characteristics of the battle being fought between a democratic, liberal, Western society and terrorist organizations, particularly those of radical Islam.

"It is important to remember that the enemy has no sovereign territory but crosses all national borders. This isn't a traditional war of army vs. army. The decisive battle does not involve capture of land with surrender of the losing side but rather the harming of people and means. When the entire control and command shifts to the civilian side, it can be used to fight other threats such as crime, drugs, fires, accidents, etc. as well."

## What is your role in the establishment of the safe city?

**Shavit:** "I define us as a boutique of integrative solutions in Homeland Security. Our solution is specifically tailored for each city after we have conducted risk analyses and have evaluated the threats. Numerous parameters must be assessed. Only after we have studied the city, the threats it faces, the type of population and its needs do we offer a specific solution for the city's needs - such as how many patrol units are needed, how many cameras and where to install them, what technology is needed, establishment of intelligence gathering organizations, what personnel, etc. In most cases, we train personnel (intelligence, police, fire department, paramedics, Magen David Adom, etc.) and know how to establish organizations whose professionals immediately respond to every incident.

"In the Mexico City project, for example, we studied the primary threats to the city - crime, drugs, money laundering, kidnapping and natural disasters and accordingly formulated a response. Every city has its own specific threats but there are common threats to all cities. We rely on our vast experience gained in many sectors, such as airlines, air and marine security, security in all energy sectors (drilling, gas stations, etc.) land transportation, border crossings, strategic assets, etc."

## What is the core issue in a safe city?

**Shavit:** "The name of the game is real time intelligence. This is the most important issue in a safe city. If you obtain real time intelligence from a patrol unit [▶





**Haim Mer: Today, we have a well-documented software package that contains all of the relevant peripherals - camera and sensor system management, many screens, alarms and detectors, fence monitoring, handling of incidents as they occur, opening, documentation and closing of all types of incidents, etc. Our software records and analyzes every incident that takes place in a safe city**

#### **What is Mabat 2000?**

**Mer:** "Mabat 2000 in the Old City in Jerusalem was established at the end of 1999 and has been upgraded several times since. It operates round the clock. Mabat 2000 began as a project against store robberies but evolved into a tool against terror and crime. The police needed a system in which 'Big Brother' would control and would allow for an overall view of events in the Old City area. The systems that we established help the defense forces to act quickly and maintain public order as well as maintain security on the streets and in central locations in the Old City in Jerusalem and its surrounding areas. It also allows for a study of the incidents and identification of suspects. The project includes hundreds of cameras that have been installed on the streets of the Old City, stations for switchboard operators and commanders, online screens and viewings of tapes, observation positions with screens at the police command post at the Western Wall, recording system for cameras, etc." ■

and you do not act on it in real time, in another hour, that intelligence will be worthless. The threats today, unlike in the past, are mobile and not stationary, and this changes the picture. If a car escaped following a bank robbery, for example, and your cameras filmed the license plate number - you have excellent intelligence that you didn't have before. Sophisticated sensors record every break-in of a fence. Call centers answer in real time to residents calls regarding any possible incident, and professionals who we train know how to effectively respond in real time. On the one hand, we have a control and command center that receives real time information. On the other hand, we train quality analysts who transform the bits of information into one large picture that we forward to the decision-makers in the field, under whom are operating forces working in real time. The control center works around the clock - intelligence is received and translated into an operational goal and then force is used in real time. Calm is restored. This process endlessly repeats itself and this mechanism facilitates the creation and durability of a safe city.

#### **A Technological Solution**

The main owners and Chairman of the Board of Directors **Haim Mer** decided in the 1990s to begin to develop security system management tools. Mer says that Athena staff serve as 'defense architects' who outline professional methodology whereas Mer is responsible for technological application.

**Mer:** "After Athena provides security consultation based on the needs of each city, Mer enters the picture to provide the best technological solution in the market. It is important to emphasize that we are coming from the client's side and our job is to provide an overall solution that complies with his needs. Our technological tools in security include software that we developed and that is used in many places around the world. Today, we have a well-documented software package that contains all of the relevant peripherals - camera and sensor system management, many screens, alarms and detectors, fence monitoring, handling of incidents as they occur, opening, documentation and closing of all types of incidents, etc. Our software records and analyzes every incident that takes place in a safe city. Other state-of-the-art technology exists that facilitate a connection between several call centers."

Among Mer's major projects include the establishment of a security system for the 2004 Olympics in Athens, the safe city project in Mexico, the establishment of emergency medical services (such as Magen David Adom) in Panama, security for the Israeli Knesset, and the company's flagship project - Mabat 2000 in the Old City. Mer: "This is one of the first safe city projects in Israel and is also one of the most advanced and largest. This project is our showcase for many other projects that we have completed around the world."

# NICE Results

Rising crime rates and growing terror related risks have significant influence on citizens and visitors of large city centers. Tackling this issue requires **advanced technological capabilities**. NICE systems provides such capabilities to tens of thousands of customers worldwide

By: Tal Aharony

In recent years, it seems as if major city centers have become targets for criminal and terrorist activities. The effects of the rise in organized crime and violent incidents are felt more than ever. Terrorist activities threaten nations from within. These phenomena cause a major challenge for security organization world wide. NICE systems has identified the challenge before-hand and committed to creating advanced technological solutions to help meet the challenges. These solutions are implemented in major cities worldwide with impressive result.

Nice Systems (NASDAQ:NICE), develops and provides systems for the collection, recording and analysis of digital video and audio retrieved from communications. NICE has two areas of business: Security sector and Enterprise sector. The Enterprise group provides products for contact centers, investment banking and more. Nice is also a world leader in the financial transactions analysis, mainly for Anti Money Laundering, fraud detection and regulation compliance.

Israel Livnat (58) has been the president of the Security Division for the past 3 years, before coming to NICE he managed ELTA systems (a subsidiary of Israel Aerospace Industries). The security division creates innovative technological capabilities aiding security organizations worldwide handle crime, terror, natural disasters and more. Livnat says that



97% of NICE's sales are to non-Israeli markets; NICE has service centers around the world employing local service and sales personnel. "Our concept is based on a variety of self-developed technologies and on our ability to access a large number of recurring, satisfied customers" says Livnat.

**The control center directs the relevant emergency teams to the situation: it could be anything from a car accident to a possible homicide. This is the essence of the Safe City - the ability to receive emergency calls, analyze them and respond immediately and efficiently**

**What are the Security Division's main activity areas?**

**Livnat:** "Our technologies include, among others, video surveillance, real-time analysis tools and command and control centers. In the video area, we are unique in our ability to control large amounts of video inputs (up to thousands). These inputs are distributed efficiently, stored and later retrieved. Nice's Safe City solutions are based on video cameras situated throughout the city. Real-time automatic analysis alerts on any abnormal activity: theft, violent incidents and more complicated incidents. The automation of the alert processes enables streamlining workflows ▶

◀] and managing multiple events simultaneously. New-Jersey Transit, one of our major customers, has implemented our video technology in the New-York and New-Jersey railway lines. Our systems automatically identify ongoing events, enabling immediate and adequate response. Such events can be: A person leaving his handbag behind him as he leaves the station, unknown activity near parked trains at night times, etc. Each event is digitally captured, routed and stored in our systems and can be later retrieved and even presented as evidence in courts of law. The Statue of Liberty, The Eiffel tower and many more important sites worldwide are currently protected using NICE security systems.

"We also offer a set of capabilities for Emergency Centers (such as the 911 control rooms in the US). Our systems have been implemented in over 70% of the Police Emergency Centers in US as well as in many other countries (England, The Far East, etc.). These are extremely advanced control rooms which receive all emergency calls in the country. People call to report injuries, car accidents, threats to their personal security or any other potential problem. Reports are identified as potential 'Life Saving' or 'Non Life Saving' situations. Calls have to be handled immediately. The professional personnel in the emergency centers undergo extensive training and are equipped to handle any situation using our systems. The control center directs the relevant emergency teams to the situation: it could be anything from a car accident to a possible homicide. This is the essence of the Safe City - the ability to receive emergency calls, analyze them and respond immediately and efficiently".

**What's the advantage that NICE brings to Control Centers?**

Livnat notes that every Control Center hosts 100-300 dispatchers. These dispatchers receive the calls and decide which team should be sent, and where. All calls are recorded in a specific format and



**Our systems automatically identify ongoing events, enabling immediate and adequate response. Such events are: A person leaving his handbag behind him as he leaves the station, unknown activity near parked trains at night times, etc. Each event is digitally captured, routed and stored in our systems and can be later retrieved and even presented as evidence in courts of law**

can be later analyzed. Livnat: "These are actually two products - one which offers a basic recording of all calls and another, called 'NICE Inform': a unique product for managing and thoroughly investigating calls. This product enables combining video content, textual reports and more. Eventually the output is CD containing all the required information that can be used in a court of law. NICE Inform dramatically improves the cooperation and integration of the different security organizations. Thus, an efficient response can be provided for many different scenarios. This contributes greatly to the safety and security of the local residents".

**Why is this need especially relevant for cities?**

**Livnat:** "Events such as the 9/11 terror attacks raise the awareness of the security

in cities. However, it is important to mention that the rise in crime rate in New York City began before these attacks and had nothing to do with them. The main issue, I think, is the urbanization process. Nearly half of the world's population resides in cities and this trend is surely too strengthen in the future. Urbanization created polarization between the peripheral zones and the commercial areas. This process has caused a rise in low level criminal activities: car theft, burglary, etc. In some places rise in crime has developed into organized crime including drug smuggling, illegal gambling, etc.

"Soon after, these criminal organizations will become the foundation for terrorist activities. In many cities around the world, there are areas where it is not safe to travel in the evenings while tourists are mugged the city centers. This situation applies for both the developed countries and the developing countries alike. There is, of course, a commercial aspect to this issue: A Safe City is frequented by more tourists. There are other financial influences such as income from city taxes and public transportation which increase when people feel safer in the city. The solution we provide is comprised of four layers"

**The Four Layers for a Safe City**

The first layer Livnat mentions is the technological capability to distribute 'eyes and ears' around the city (using video and communications surveillance) and gather all the information into one unified center. Nice Systems' can collect and store all the relevant data. The second layer is the situation assessment. This is the layer that enables creating the 'bigger picture', thus enabling a holistic view of the city (situation awareness): Where are the events taking place, where are the relevant forces, who should be sent to respond, etc. The ability to create such situation awareness is extremely important. Major cities can have 20-50 emergency incidents concurrently, ▶



It's crucial to quickly prioritize the tasks for the different emergency teams. "We've developed a powerful tool that can collect this information from various sources. This tool manages an incidents' bank - all the relevant data is displayed for user prioritization. Each type of incident has a different workflow built in to the system" explains Livnat.

The third layer is prevention. This layer encompasses the intelligence capability to foresee incidents. For example: gathering intelligence on a bank robbery, identifying terrorist organizations and more. Livnat: "The intelligence tools, developed in NICE, can monitor communications, alert abnormal incidents and provide alerts on different kinds of threats". The

fourth layer is the investigation. After an incident has happened, a designated tool for inquiry and investigation is required. "Our systems can take all the gathered information (video, audio, geographical information, etc.) and process it into an insightful report. These systems can be used to track anything from car theft to drug trafficking and more", says Livnat.

The Headquarters and Command and Control Center of NICE customer, UK Police Force, Hampshire Constabulary



### Nice Intelligence Solutions

A main area of business NICE is engaged with is the Intelligence domain. NICE's Intelligence Solution's Division has implemented intelligence solutions worldwide. This division provides leading intelligence solutions to top police forces, security organizations and intelligence agencies. Naturally, NICE can not expose detail regarding its intelligence customers other than these are some of the top security organizations in the world.

One of the division's most evident advantages is its experienced human resource. This resource is dedicated to developing technologies, work methods and advanced algorithms, which are later implemented in its intelligence solutions. These intelligence solutions enable NICE's customers to lawfully collect data from different communication sources such as phone or email communications. Intelligence input can be derived from the content of the calls but also from analysis of the relations between different suspects or their geographic locations. Another advantage of NICE as a market leader is its ability to provide an End-to-End solution to its customers: From raw data collection to processed intelligence dissemination to operatives. Raw data is processed into insightful intelligence using different processing and analysis tools. These tools automatically point out intelligence insights to the system's users.

Today's threats, criminal and terrorist alike, are complicated and require special capabilities. Terrorists, for example, suspect that calls made from their mobile devices are intercepted by security organizations. This is why, when planning a terrorist activity, they use new and designated phones. These phones are unknown to intelligence and security organizations and therefore are not monitored. The terrorists will only use these phones to contact one another, thus eliminating the risk of being connected to any of their known contacts. NICE's intelligence solutions systems identify such patterns, and provide alerts in advance, thus aiding security organizations in stopping these crimes before taking place.

NICE's systems are currently installed in different organizations worldwide. These systems assist, daily, in saving lives and preventing serious crime.

A motto in the division is that its real competitors are terror and serious crime organizations. NICE solutions enable security organizations to be a few steps ahead of their targets.

# Safe and Legal City

**How to protect a 'safe city' without infringing upon the basic rights and privacy of citizens. The legal aspects**

In recent years, tremendous efforts have been made by mayors, managers, city defense and security experts, unions and companies in Israel and around the world to find solutions to the many challenges involved with transforming a city authority into a 'safe city'. These efforts are manifested in a technological aspect, via installation of thousands of cameras in the field and in a human aspect, e.g. in the attempt to transition from a general political solution that would provide citizens with personal security to urban policing that would provide local urban security to the defined community.

Concurrently, the question arises as to how we can do this without infringing upon the basic rights of citizens to privacy. What are the main legal issues faced by those parties implementing the Safe City project and what solutions are available to them.

## The Right to Security vs. The Right to Privacy

The Basic Law of Human Dignity and Liberty states that every individual is entitled to protection of his life, body, property and dignity. This is a basic social right, under which we can, for example, employ various technologies to enable civilians to maintain their natural right to life and security.

In contrast, the basic right to privacy, also anchored in the Basic Law of Human Dignity and Liberty, posits that every individual is entitled to privacy, and that the authorities must refrain from searches without the individual's consent and avoid violations of confidentiality.

How is the paradox between the two resolved? Can the city install cameras

everywhere without infringing upon the right to privacy? Any infringement of the aforementioned basic rights must meet the criteria of the restrictions passage in the Basic Law:

**The first condition:** legislation must be advanced in the Knesset (parliament) that would provide a solution to the necessary personal security needs in accordance with the 'safe city' vision.

**The second condition:** the new law must be compatible with the country's values as a Jewish Democratic country.

**The third condition:** the law must be for a worthy cause. The right balance that would enable protection of the right to life and security vs. infringement on privacy can be found.

**The fourth condition:** the infringement must be measured not exceed what is necessary.

A review of other democracies revealed that if done in an orderly manner, through suitable primary legislation, citizens stand a strong chance of receiving a proper level of security while maintaining their right to privacy without this being used by authorities to monitor and control. The feeling of being monitored, e.g. that Big Brother is watching you, can definitely be neutralized with enactment of legislation that limits the installation of cameras to strategic public places and for security purposes only without invading privacy and while maintaining human dignity.

## The Protection of Privacy Law

The Protection of Privacy Law 5741-1981 defines an infringement of privacy and establishes that anyone who violates any of the provisions of the law is committing a civil offense. The law is a particular law that regulates privacy protection. As

**The feeling of being monitored, e.g. that Big Brother is watching you, can definitely be neutralized with enactment of legislation that limits the installation of cameras to strategic public places and for security purposes only without invading privacy and while maintaining human dignity**

far as we are concerned, every 'Safe City' project must comply with the provisions of The Protection of Privacy Law. Every infringement that occurs as a result of the project must be legally approved in compliance with the provisions of The Protection of Privacy Law and must be applied according to and in compliance with the provisions stipulated in the restrictive passage in the Basic Law of Human Dignity and Liberty.

## "Safe City"?!

The vision of a 'safe city' is currently being materialized. The goal is much welcomed. The means many. Not many people will object to the idea of our children living in a safer city in the future. Yet, however, an opinion should be issued regarding the provision of a comprehensive legal solution that would prevent situations that no Israeli would want to face in the future. "Safe City" if not properly administered and implemented, and without proper legal basis, might prove to be a double-edged sword. As such, we call on everyone involved in this project, both in the Israeli Knesset, and various officials in the local authorities, as well as any companies involved in this important arena, to work to regulate the legal aspects involved in this endeavor, and the sooner the better [■]

**The authors are a managing partner and advocate in the Law Firm of Gideon Fisher & Co.**





# Maintaining the Base

Shraga Brosh, President of the Manufacturers Association of Israel (MAI) and Chairman of the Federation of Israeli Economic Organizations (FIEO) is naturally optimistic. **Despite the economic crisis and differences of opinions with the government**, his vision reflects an Israeli industry that is efficient, competitive and marketable on a global scale and one that maintains its manufacturing base in Israel

By: Zehava Dovrat

**"The** Israeli market is small and cannot base continual growth on local private consumption. Its market growth depends solely on its ability to manufacture and export to foreign markets," says Shraga Brosh, President of the MAI, who is also serving as chairman of the FIEO. According to Brosh, in the past five years of growth, industrial exports were responsible for the overall market's 5% average growth. Since 2006, however, the shekel's growing strength against other world currencies significantly and adversely impacted Israeli exporters' ability to provide competitive prices to foreign customers. Following significant industry streamlining, exporters were forced to downsize in Q2-2008.

"The date when layoffs began in the industry must be emphasized since it predated the official outbreak of the global crisis, in September 2008, and was attributed to two years of continued diminished competitive ability" adds Brosh. He further notes that "happily, over this past year, the year of the global crisis and to May of this year, industry has enjoyed a friendly dollar-shekel exchange rate as a result of two parameters - luck and intelligence: the strengthening of the dollar around the world and the intervention of the Governor in trade, respectively. Over the past several months, some export sectors have shown signs of fragile recovery, following strong 20% declines last year. Concurrently, as of May this year, the dollar began weakening around the world and in Israel, and with it our competitive ability. I again unequivocally reemphasize that

without a strong dollar-shekel exchange rate, we cannot favorably compete and increase exports. This is an actual threat to the Israeli market's and job market's ability to recover."

Brosh, who represents employers, is concerned about Israeli exporters' ability to compete. Although optimistic by nature, he finds it hard to see how Israel can extract itself from such a serious economic crisis quickly. Brosh: "We need to distinguish between the financial markets, where fluctuations in both directions are always volatile, and the real markets. Governments worldwide have spent vast sums of money that must affect operations. Most cast their bread upon the water with the hopes that the tremendous government financial investment would reinvigorate the business sector and that by 2010, the economic engines around the world would be operating at full speed, and would repay the government its investment. This is an audacious assumption that arose due to the lack of alternatives but bears a tremendous cost. I believe that 2010 will be a test year and will determine whether the world's markets recover or whether the least preferable scenario occurs in which markets will require many years to recover from last year's crisis."

**Finance Minister Steinitz proposes cancelling the VAT increase and employer participation in National Insurance from January. What's happening with that?**

**Brosh:** "Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz, Chairman of the Histadrut Ofer Eini and

myself discussed this and scheduled a series of meetings in the round table forum in order to identify effective ways to enable the Israeli market to cope with fluctuating exchange rates. There is one goal - reinforce the competitive ability of Israeli exporters and the means can differ. I am convinced that action is needed to reduce business sector costs, taxes, property taxes, levies, payroll, etc. to enable them to compete around the world, and this issue will be discussed in the appropriate forums."

**You demanded that the government compensate exporters in fiscal aspects at the rate of monetary losses they incurred as a result of declining dollar exchange rates with the shekel. What are the chances that this demand will be met? What will happen if it is not?**

"I never demanded the government compensate exporters. I did request that exporters be allowed to act competitively by improving the business environment. As a market that is distant from target markets and raw material, one that is characterized by bureaucracy and problematic infrastructure, Israeli exporters find it extremely difficult to act fairly against foreign competition. I will say something else - it is very easy for industrialists to transfer their manufacturing operations outside the country. If the government believes that the market requires a strong industrial backbone that will be the driving force behind trade and services, it must provide it with the necessary conditions to act here, even during periods where the shekel is strong."

## A Lateral Error

The package includes an agreement that the business sector and employees will make financial compromises in order to support the growth budget package that the government could not have budgeted. According to Brosh, this involves significant additions to tourism, to encouragement of investments in the suburbs, to research and development and to renovation of educational institutions. "Immediately after the national budget was established, the decision was made regarding unprecedented across-the-board cuts of almost 20% of the biannual budget. Growth increments were also hurt by this cut. In this last budget cut, we were not willing to give up even one shekel from the growth budget. These budgets that were funded by employees and the business sector. The Minister of Finance announced that he had no intention of damaging these budgets any more and I hope that the budgets will be implemented and will help Israel's economy to begin hiring again" says Brosh.

In the meantime, local industry is moving to manufacture overseas, posing one of the greatest threats to the Israeli market. "As I mentioned," says Brosh "The Israeli industrialist can decide to relocate or develop overseas relatively quickly. With a steadily declining competitive ability, and with countries such as Romania offering strong incentives, including investment grants and tax easements to draw foreign investors, the decision becomes easier. According to our findings, over 30% of Israeli industry is already

operating overseas and this trend is increasing. Since Israel cannot become a trade or service country, I believe that the Israeli government must act more vigorously to ensure that Israeli industries continue to operate and employ employees, suppliers and subcontractors in Israel rather than in Romania."

**Discuss the relations with the Histadrut [main labor union] and Histadrut Chairman Ofer Eini, and the front facing Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz.**

"Happily, the Finance Minister is not facing a front. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz do understand the importance of everyone working together so that the general needs are clear to everyone. Just as Ofer and I have been working together for 4 years, creating success for all parties - beginning with a dramatic reduction in the number of strikes that have taken place, continuing with pensions for everyone, etc. - so that the government-Histadrut-employer trio may lead to significant change in force used in the Israeli market, transitioning from a culture of strikes and confrontations to a culture of discussion and partnership. It's a win-win situation for everyone."

**What prominent changes have taken place in Israeli industry and its management?**

"Over the past decade, Israeli industry has undergone significant changes. With



the opening of its market to free trade with the world, Israeli industry has become innovative and competitive. The change requires creative, bold management that is open to change, and one that is particularly focused on innovation in both manufacturing and in the product itself. Today, industry executives are global executives that are thoroughly familiar with the

global markets and know how to position their products there."

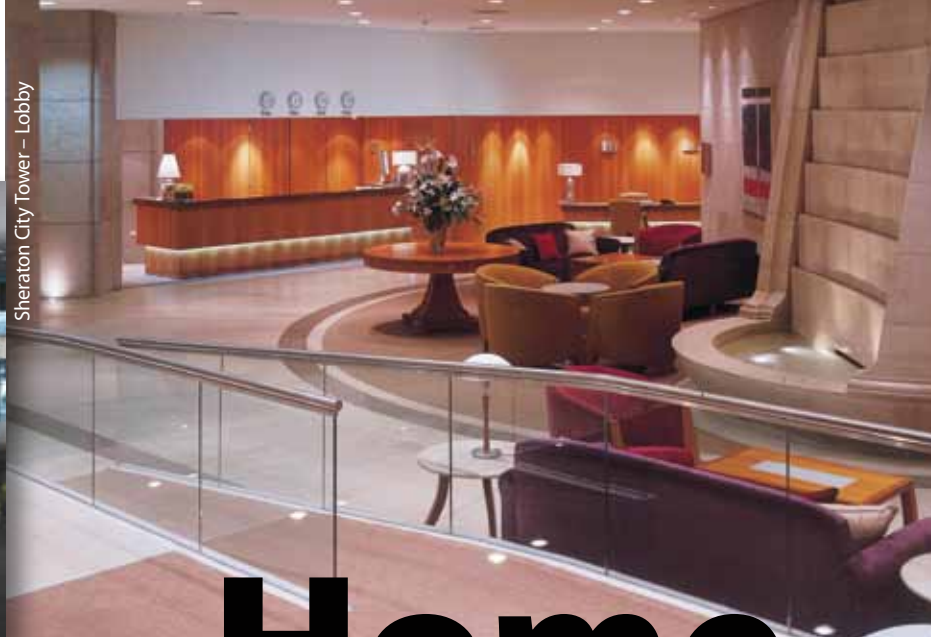
**What's in store for the future? What does the future of Israeli industry look like?**

"If I had to make predictions about the Israeli industry in another ten years, I believe that I would see an innovative, efficient, competitive and marketable industry, one that has manufacturing lines around the world but that still maintains its base in Israel. An industry that enjoys a competitive, bureaucratic-free business environment and that benefits from quality, fast port system. An industry whose employees are skilled and creative and who earn a decent salary for their work. An industry that is preferred by government and public alike and one that enjoys government encouragement in investments as well as in research and development. In particular, an industry where decision-makers would ask it what it needed to continue to grow and develop." ■



Crowne Plaza City Center

Sheraton City Tower – Lobby



Crowne Plaza City Center

# Just Like Home

Modern business travelers who stay in hotels in their own country or in foreign countries have numerous and varied requests. Whereas a **comfortable room and access to a phone or computer** were sufficient services for business travelers in the past, this past decade, with its tremendous technological developments, have seen a change in demands and hotels have adjusted accordingly

By: Ehud Rosen

**The** main target audience of business hotels in Israel is primarily business travelers from Europe, North America and East Asia who travel here to close deals in real estate, diamonds, hi-tech, etc. or to attend business meetings, conferences and exhibitions. They choose a hotel based on the services it offers and its proximity to a major city. Another target audience is Israeli business people who stay in business hotels prior to meeting their Israeli or foreign colleagues.



According to **Shmuel Tsurel, CEO of the Israel Hotel Association**, most business hotels in Israel are located in Tel-Aviv, Herzliya, Haifa and Jerusalem. Tsurel: "Israel is an important business center with strong ties to the global village. Over the past 15 years, dramatic developments have taken place in the business hotel sector. In 2000, business travelers who arrived in Israel for business purposes comprised 11% of all incoming tourism. Although


the numbers themselves declined during the years of crisis, interestingly, the percentage of business travelers relatively increased during this period, and stands at approximately 25% of all incoming tourism. Today, with the recovery from the economic crisis, the situation reverted to the status quo and business travelers comprise about 15% of all tourists."

Business travelers who arrive here need business hotels that provide solutions to their needs. What are these needs? What is the underlying philosophy of business hotels in Israel and around the world?



## Location

**Raphy Weiner, CEO of the TAMARES group**, owner of the Daniel Hotel in Herzliya, says that business hotels are generally located in the heart of major cities such as Tel-Aviv, Herzliya and Haifa, just as is standard anywhere else in the world, with convenient access to major highways and airports.

**Tsurel adds:** "In Tel-Aviv and Herzliya, many hotels are located along the beach and within a relatively short distance from the Ayalon Highway. In a small country such as Israel, with its short distances, there is demand for what are considered attractive locations: near the beach, In Haifa- in the Carmel Mountains, etc. Business travelers want to enjoy whatever the city 



✈️ has to offer. In certain places overseas that are not tourist destinations (such as Seoul or Taipei) business hotels are built in less attractive locations, based on the type of business."



**Dubi Rakia, CEO of Sheraton City Tower Hotel in Ramat-Gan** says that the decision was made to locate the hotel on the outskirts of Tel-Aviv, near the main business highways with good access. Rakia: "Most hotels in the Tel-Aviv metropolitan area are located on the Western shore. Concurrently, in recent years, demand has risen for hotels that are on the outside the metropolitan area, since most business travelers arrive for intensive work and not vacations, and would prefer avoiding city traffic while remaining close to the locations of the meetings. Access to the Ayalon Highway and to other major traffic routes are another key advantage."



**Ron Yariv, CEO of Crowne Plaza City Center Hotel in Azrieli Center**, adds that many business hotels are located in airports (e.g. in Frankfurt and Paris). Yariv: "Airport hotels are designed for business travelers who arrive for short periods of time for business meetings and do not enter the city at all. Around the world, there is a wide range of business centers with business hotels (e.g. on Wall Street, in centers that have banks, etc.) in airports and in tourist centers. At Azrieli, we tried to create something new – a proper business hotel located near major highways. The entire hotel experience is to serve business travelers, with emphasis on availability and accessibility."

## Philosophy

### What is the underlying philosophy of business tourism?

Rakia: "A quality business hotel must provide business travelers with top notch service and accessibility alongside exclusive recreational options and other services such as spas and gourmet restaurants, all of which encourages the business travelers to visit the hotel on



Daniel Hotel

**Ron Yariv: "In terms of business philosophy, we are constantly striving to 'upgrade' the quality of time for business travelers. Through smart elevators, fast internet in the room that is included in the price, fast check-in, accessible taxis, a list of flight arrival and departure at the airport and any other information or issue that can save and maximize the travelers' time"**

weekends as well, combining business and pleasure. Critical to achievement of this vision is the range of services being offered by the hotel: conference rooms and supplementary services for business meetings (fax, photocopy machines, internet stations and mobile phones), etc.

**Weiner:** "A business hotel's main objective is to host business travelers and to provide them with all business and hotel services during their stay outside the office and home. The Daniel Hotel and others operate a separate business department that personally and directly handles business travelers and remains in constant contact with officials in companies located both in Israel and overseas that send guests on their behalf. The department compiles relevant information about the guests' personal needs. The sales and reservation procedure for business travelers differs from that for other hotel guests, and business travelers receive personal, unique attention."

**Yariv:** "In terms of business philosophy, we are constantly striving to 'upgrade' the quality of time for business travelers. Through smart elevators, fast internet in

the room that is included in the price, fast check-in, accessible taxis, a list of flight arrival and departure at the airport and any other information or issue that can save and maximize the travelers' time."

### What services are provided by business hotels?

**Rakia:** "We offer a selection of luxury and state-of-the-art executive rooms, deluxe rooms, spacious, modern presidential suites, a business and media center for business meetings that includes 7 well-equipped conference rooms, facilities to receive audiences (up to 120 people), restaurants, swimming pool, state-of-the-art gym and, of course, a range of massages and spa treatments."

**Weiner:** "All rooms at the Daniel Hotel are equipped with business desks, connection to fast , WIRELESS internet and a connection to DIAL UP internet, an English-language newspaper and entrance into the business lounge that includes light refreshment an open bar alongside computers with internet connection for anyone who comes without a laptop, or WIRELESS service to people who do have laptops. We also offer such business services as fax, photocopy, translation, printing, internet, work processing, cell phone rental, delivery services and business information."

**Yariv:** "It is, of course, important that the business center that offers photocopying, printing and other services. Additional critical services include fast internet in the room, which is included in the price, and video conferencing, conference rooms, room service and a lounge where people can meet."

## Demands

### What types of hotels are suitable for foreign business travelers?

Rakia: "We are today seeing changes in perceptions of business hospitality both overseas and in Israel that allows business travelers to enjoy office and telecommunication services in the hotel along with spa and hospitality service that allow them to break the 📺

stressful work routine. Gourmet restaurants, gyms and spas are today considered an integral part of hotel services. Business people who frequently travel love to use their limited spare time to keep fit, take colleagues from the country to restaurants near the hotel and to enjoy pampering spa treatments."

"A review of current hospitality trends reveals two strategies that are gaining popularity: on the one hand, boutique hotels that are particularly suited for domestic and foreign tourism and that are trying to make hotels friendlier and warmer. On the other hand are business hotels that are retaining their official nature and allow their customers to combine going out to meetings and hospitality in hotels. For this reason, most hotels designated rooms for business meetings, making sure to locate the hotel in an accessible environment."

**Weiner:** "The types of hotels that are suitable for business travelers are those that are capable of filling the needs of business travelers who frequently arrive for 24-hour visits and require full attention 24/7. The hotel's role is to make the travelers' stay as pleasant as possible while providing quick, efficient, accurate and effective hotel services that would encourage these travelers to return to the hotel and make it their home in Israel."

**Yariv:** "Although many boutique hotels are extremely successful, the chains have a tremendous advantage. A chain hotel

has a parent company, someone to turn to if something goes wrong. The issue of security and safety are important as well. Azrieli has dual security, both at the hotel and in the shopping center and this is a major advantage. We have cameras on all floors as well as a skilled security team. The international chain conducts random checks and if we do not correct any detected irregularities within 30 days, we are fined."

#### **Do business travelers have special demands?**

**Rakia:** "Over the past several decades, business people in Israel and from around the world have been raising the threshold for hospitality. The reason is attributed to globalization, which has led to more frequent overseas travel. Business people have extremely clear demands. In addition to the regular business services, there is a demand to open business centers in the hotel at night in order to bypass time differences. Business people expect the hotel to grant them all auxiliary services during their stay in the country – from ordering cabs or limousines, to obtaining tickets to performances, recommendations for restaurants and local invitations, etc. In addition, there is a demand for room service in the deluxe rooms and suites in the event they are hosting colleagues in the rooms for meetings that occasionally extend well into overtime."

**Yariv:** "One of the most important things for business people is quick, efficient action. They want to not be disturbed, that we be familiar with their business and

know how their company operates. This information can be extremely helpful in our dealings with them. Even food. Indian business people have different culinary preferences than do business travelers from Brazil. It is important that we know exactly what our customers need, as well as what the people with whom they are meeting in the hotel need. In brief, we need emotional insight. Many business travelers arrive alone and feel isolated during their stay. It is therefore important that we have people who can discuss with them financial issues, politics, and anything that is going on in the country.

#### **What does the future hold for business tourism?**

**Tsurel:** "On the one hand, the future of business tourism faces a technological threat, e.g. video conferencing, which costs far less than the cost of business travel. On the other hand, the global village is rapidly developing, and very strong players are entering the market. Massive entry of Asian countries such as China, India and even Indonesia, Vietnam or Brazil is having a tremendous impact. These players are only beginning to play in the international arena, which offsets the technology 'risks' that reduce demand. Increased standards of living in these countries will lead to increased business tourism. Since Israel is in an excellent position in terms of its types of leading industries – hi-tech, bio-technology and other scientific disciplines that lead international trade), this ensures continued business tourism development in Israel." ■

### **Hospitality Complex in Romania**



In the heart of Bucharest, Romania is the Elbit Imaging Group hospitality complex, owned by businessman Motti Zisser. The complex includes a 424-room hotel as well as a 293-room apartment hotel. In addition, the complex contains a casino, fitness center and spa with an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, outdoor Jacuzzi in the hotel garden, six restaurants including a Mediterranean bistro, an Italian restaurant, a meat and seafood restaurant, an Irish bar, a floating bar in the lobby center, a swimming pool restaurant, etc.

The complex and the Centre Ville Hotel in it is one of the leading facilities in Europe, and is designed to fulfill the needs of business travelers who arrive for long- and short-term stays in the city. According to Yaron Ashkenazi, CEO of Centre Ville, business tourism has a clear logic: "In addition to its central location, the hotel must provide all services that business travelers need to close a deal (business center, wireless internet, business lounge, etc.). Equally as important are parking services, concierge services, top quality and fast service and a speedy response to the customer's changing needs" notes Ashkenazi.





## Face in Chinese Business

**Face is such an essential component of the Chinese psyche; It regulates most cultural conduct such as gift giving, negotiations and of course building business relationships. That is the main commodity that business in China runs on - paying respect and earning respect**

**A well known** proverb in China states: A person needs face like a tree needs bark. Its said to someone as a warning if they have been behaving dishonorably. But what is seen as dishonorable behavior in China and how do you need to adjust your interactions to succeed in business?

The main commodity that business in China runs on is paying respect and earning respect - in a word, face. It is such an essential component of the national psyche; it regulates most cultural conduct such as gift giving, negotiations and of course building business relationships.

The Berlitz Cross Cultural training program outlines some important issues if you are planning to do business in China. To get you started, here are some basic recommendations from Berlitz to consider regarding face when you are working with the Chinese:

**Gift giving** is a mandatory part of doing business in China. Gifts should be given for celebrations or as thanks for assistance. The gifts should be given publically to

increase face of the person receiving the gift. You may be asked what you like in anticipation of a gift for you. It is respectful to your host to say you like Chinese ink drawings or tea.

One of the most significant elements in negotiations with the Chinese is your **personal relationship**. It is important to establish a rapport of trust and even friendship before you attempt to sign a deal. Be aware that your Chinese counterpart will try to use the personal relationship to seek concessions from you during the negotiations, usually towards the end, as a final proof of your commitment to the relationship more than to the deal.

**Punctuality is essential.** Being late is seen as a direct message of public disrespect and your counterpart may lose face. Remember, the first meeting will be focused on building the relationship. Keep the conversation light - talk about your experiences in China so far. Don't try to impress them with your achievements. **Humility is admired** whereas braggarts have no face.

One way to give face to your counterpart and thereby build the relationship is to **do your homework**. Find out everything you can about the individuals you are meeting with, their company, the region in China they affect and the current news regarding their local, regional and global market. You may be surprised at how much they know about you. When you demonstrate a deep understanding of their business, you show respect and prove you are worthy of their trust.

The body language and social cues are so subtle and complex it is recommended to use a **local interlocutor**. This is the first person you need to develop a close relationship with.

**Endorsements and recommendations are golden keys** that can open the right doors for you. Before you approach the 'big fish' in your market, it is important to choose a respected ally in the market and develop a close relationship of mutual benefit. This does not mean that you are out of the picture. **Your presence in meetings**, even if they are in Chinese, shows your respect to the clients you are wooing and gives them and your local colleague that ever important element - Face [■]

**The writer is the Country Manager of Instruction, Berlitz Israel**



# Safe City

"Safe City" policies are being implemented in many cities around the world. In Israel, this policy has been adopted by several cities, with others considering or discussing it. **Seven mayors discuss what a safe city means to them**, how they are implementing it and what the results are

**By:** Israel Gateway Editorial Staff



**"A** safe city is one that implements the simplest norms necessary for a quiet, safe life - a city free of violence, free of alcohol consumption in public parks. A city in which shops that sell alcohol do not remain open until the early hours of the morning. A city in which people respect each other and where there is no fear of falling victim to a protection racket. A city whose residents feel safe. A safe city is a city whose residents cooperate and respond to every violation of the norm as established by public leaders. A safe city is one in which thugs and gangs rule the roost, one that responds quickly to

burglaries, youth at risk, dysfunctional families and one that contributes to effective education for preschoolers for the first five years in order to prevent the formation of violence." This is, former Police Commissioner Assaf Hefetz's vision of a safe city.

Hefetz, in conjunction with the Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Internal Security, is spearheading city involvement in safety, inter alia, through city police. He emphasizes that as long as mayors remain uninvolved, tremendous potential is being wasted. "Mayors have all of the information, including the education system. They must handle violations of norms that trigger social chaos or vice versa. When insisting on all norms - large and small alike - a criminal-

free society will be created. Safety also includes traffic accidents, the ability of people to move from place to place, convenience, speed and accessibility," says Hefetz.

In most cities and countries around the world, the local police works alongside national and regional police. The guideline is that the major must be involved in civilian safety, and when this happens, the desired effectiveness is achieved. "Mayors embody potential for change," says Hefetz.

**Heads of local authorities are screaming that they don't have money. How will they carry this out?**

Hefetz: "The sum involved is minute. It's not a problem of money but responsibility. ▶





Reuven Ben Shachar    Dov Tzur    Itzhak Goltbary    Miriam Feierberg    Yona Yahav    Yechiel Lasry    Nahum Hofree

◀ The heads of local authorities must understand that they are responsible for the events in their cities, and that the police will cooperate. Intelligence, search for missing people and the war against drugs do not interest mayors. They will have their own force - the city police. What's the model? What are the authorities? This is a tactical question. I would like mayors to issue a safety agenda for the public, one that they will be able to implement."

Indeed, many cities around the country, such as Rehovot, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Hadera, Rishon le Zion and others, have already begun investing in this project. Hefetz states that during a meeting with Givatayim's mayor, the latter informed him of promising achievements in crime reduction.

**What needs to happen for change to take place?**

Hefetz: "An agreement between the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Internal Security and the Ministry of Finance regarding a three-year pilot program that will be led by a body appointed by the Prime Minister's Office and that will ultimately involve approximately 250 tremendously powerful city organizations.

"The safe city model has been evolving over the past 30-40 years. Community policing has resulted in a 30% drop in crime. New York's mayor has devoted a great deal of time to this issue and provides excellent service to its citizens, since he wants to be reelected. In Israel, this has not been carried out so far for a variety of reasons, including the negative image of mayors. As such, a system of checks

and balances must be created, and a statement about transparency policies in cities must be issued. Mayors who do not take care of their city will be replaced. The police is not exempt from its failure to implement the safe city since it does not cooperate with mayors and demands the reduction of crime while also demanding increased budgets."

**Assaf Hefetz: Mayors have all of the information, including the education system. They must handle violations of norms that trigger social chaos or vice versa. When insisting on all norms - large and small alike - a criminal-free society will be created. Safety also includes traffic accidents, the ability of people to move from place to place, convenience, speed and accessibility**

According to Assaf Hefetz, the safe city solution is a social, rather than a police, solution. The police is only part of the solution. "We can find solutions to any problem that arises but we must first and foremost understand the meaning of a safe city and the significance of the roles of mayors and leaders in this issue. They must have a board of directors who focus on this. A city that properly copes with its everyday dealings will know how to cope during emergencies. Having an overall vision is the core of every issue."

**A City Without Violence**  
So what has happened so far? A ministerial committee to fight violence

chose Hadera and nineteen other cities to be involved in the City Without Violence project, which was successfully attempted in Eilat. The project, which received a five million shekel budget in Hadera for three years, will be managed through a local steering committee headed by Mayor Haim Avitan. The vision: "Creation of an urban climate that promotes mutual respect, tolerance, discussion, negotiations and protection of human rights and dignity while eschewing crime, violation of human rights and unlawful use of force of any kind."

The Committee to Fight Violence headed by Deputy Inspector General Dr. Danny Gimshi, suggested that the city town level is a far more effective level for coping with violence and crime and the solution involves the establishment of a city organizational system that will coordinate and focus anti-crime and anti-violence programs.

The "City Without Violence" model was developed and tried in Eilat in 2004 with the understanding that violence is not just a personal problem but a social one that requires systematic intervention that includes an understanding of the causes as well as identification of solutions. Systematic management on a city level confronts violence in the family, violence on the roads, child and juvenile violence inside and outside of school as well as criminal violence. It also involves identifying common denominators and the creation of solutions by the entire system, i.e. welfare, police, education and health.

**Zero Tolerance for Violence**

**Givatayim Mayor Reuven Ben Shachar**

A safe city is one whose city activities make it safer. Over the past three years, we have frequently worked to reinforce the personal sense of security. Israeli Police data from the past two years reveals that we are in the right direction and that every year we are recording a 30% drop in standard crime in the city (burglaries, disturbance of peace and order, vandalism, etc.). This achievement can directly be attributed to the joint action of two parties: the Givatayim police, which two years ago began operating in the city after 7 years, during which there was no precinct in the city, and a city security patrol, which is currently marking two years of operations. During these two years, the patrol, in conjunction with the Givatayim Police, has handled approximately 3500 incidents. The city call center has become a sophisticated command, control and operation center. In addition to the patrol, the call center controls the security camera system installed in public parks in the city, which has proved to be tremendously effective in preventing and documenting incidents.

The city law enforcement agencies are entitled to act against crime in their city. Although the agencies should be granted other authorities that they currently do not have, Givatayim trained patrols as Ministry of Environment inspectors. By virtue of this training, these patrols have far more authorities. We are spearheading zero tolerance policies against any display of violence or vandalism in the city. In accordance with the law, we disperse fights and prevent young people from consuming alcohol in public city parks. In addition, the city launches information and educational campaigns to prevent violence before it occurs. City policing is not designed to replace the police but to supplement its operations, subject to professional instructions of the police station in the city. The city security patrol is made up of city residents who know the city, and are consummate professionals. A safe city can flourish only with the cooperation between the police and the authority. I am required to focus efforts on groups of young people in public parks, prevent vandalism and, more recently, prevent car theft. That we have a city agency allows us to concentrate our efforts in these areas and achieve critical successes.

I believe that city policing must base its professional management on Israel Police instructions but its organizational management and instructions from the city. Only joint activity will succeed. A safe city creates better opportunities for the city and its residents. A safe city is one that is pleasant to live in, fun to spend time in and creates a desire to live and work there. In this case, everybody wins.

