

15TH
INDIA ISRAEL
FORUM

A Report

— 14–15 DECEMBER 2022 —

This report may not be reproduced in whole or in part, in any form beyond the reproduction permitted by Section 52 of the Indian Copyright Act, 1957 and excerpts by reviewers for the public press, without express written permission from the organisers – Ananta Aspen Centre, Confederation of Indian Industry and Tel Aviv University.

The organisers have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information presented in this document. However, neither Ananta Aspen Centre/Confederation of Indian Industry/Tel Aviv University nor any of its Trustees or employees can be held responsible for any financial consequences arising out of the use of information provided herein.

Executive Summary

The 15th annual meeting of the India-Israel Forum was held in person on the 14th and 15th in December 2022 in New Delhi. The Forum was co-convened by the Ananta Aspen Centre, Confederation of Indian Industry and Tel Aviv University.

The meeting was a milestone as it marked 30 years of diplomatic relations. India and Israel share thirty years of a partnership, a deep cultural connection, and military and economic cooperation. To commemorate this occasion Ananta Centre and Tel Aviv University came out with a book titled - Trusted Partners: 30 years of India Israel with essays from experts from Israel and India. To deepen the association and engagement, the co-chairs of the Forum have decided to convene more often to discuss and deliberate on matters relating to the Forum and to take the bilateral relationship forward.

The in-person meeting held after two years reflected on past efforts as well as recent developments to strengthen the bilateral relationship and deliberated on measures to be taken to secure a sustainable future. Key government officials, stakeholders, academics, and experts from India and Israel discussed contemporary challenges and brainstormed to find innovative solutions.

Against this backdrop, the Forum's program included sessions on Global Power Play, Economic Relations, and New Opportunities, Academic and R&D, India and Israel in the region, and Future Technologies. As in the previous years, the Forum held its annual Forum workshop on cyber security. The 15th India

Israel Forum ended with a public session on *"Future Tech and the Interplay with Geopolitics: Where do India and Israel stand?"*



Opening Session

REMARKS BY VINAY KWATRA

Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

The India Israel relationship has changed over time, in terms of the direction of the relationship, intensity of the relationship, the nature of the relationship, and triangulation of these three elements, the specifics of the relationship, whether in economic terms, or in political terms, or in engagement and cooperation in regional and international organisations.

Forums like this in particular provide a kind of value proposition that any government-to-government relationship would look for in terms of the stakeholders that are not part of the government but are yet absolutely integral to the growth of the relationship.

This year is a unique year as both countries celebrated 30 years of diplomatic relations. The visit of Prime Minister Modi in 2017 was a landmark visit because that's the year when the relationship was upgraded to a strategic partnership. Some of the areas of India Israel cooperation which have done exceedingly well are in the field of agriculture, where both countries have achieved considerable progress and achievements. One of the key domains in the transformation of Indian agriculture is the use of technology and I think this will change the entire ecosystem of agriculture. In this domain Israel has unique global strengths.

The technology centricity of water use in which Israel excels can be of enormous benefit in the Indian ecosystem. Where India and Israel can cooperate, more is in the field of connectivity.

India Israel need to ensure a far deeper connect in the field of education going down to the undergraduate levels. For that India needs to connect outcomes to the economy needs. Another element of research and innovation segments which can translate into concrete business benefits is in the manufacturing sector. It's a space where we (India) would encourage Israeli business sector to look at more closely for it to be part of the global supply chains.

In the Indian business segment, there is a great interest in the infrastructure sector in Israel, whether railways or ports. Space is another area where India and Israel can collaborate in. We can stretch this series of political and economic engagement across regional groupings, regional arrangements, and regional understandings with I2U2 being a part of it.

Our partnership can be a force multiplier for stability and a voice for peace and sanity. It is imperative bilaterally for India Israel cooperation, to look at where we are in terms of what we can do with each other for each other together for the rest of the world in the economic space, and also how we can partner to harness the political strength of our strategic partnership as a collective conscious voice for regional stability in the region and the rest of the world.

SPECIAL ADDRESS BY ALON USHPIZ

Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel

The two most important pillars of Indian and Israeli cooperation are security (missile defence & UAVs) and food and water security.

There is a shift in the way governments design policy, a shift in the definition of like mindedness. It is more about what we can do jointly together. India and Israel are harbingers who look at like-mindedness as a sophisticated tool of partnership.

There are four essential developments in the region that are significant. The Abraham Accords and the Negev Summit has normalized Israel's relations with several countries in the region. There is hope in a more evolutionary engagement in the region. There is very important shift in relations between Israel, Egypt, and Jordan.

The I2U2 is built on the idea of like-mindedness and each state brings to the table a unique qualification.

The fourth is that the opening of Israeli embassies in Azerbaijan and Singapore is an expression of a shift in global posturing toward Israel.

The basis of the India-Israel relationship remains unchanged. Values, needs, the relations between people, chemistry and the hunger for success drives the partnership.

The most important ingredient of this partnership is technology and tech stands at the heart of I2U2 and the centres for excellence. There are currently 40 centres of agricultural excellence in India. Tech

cooperation stands out in defense, modern security, in innovation, in quantum. AI, and cyber security. Moving forward it is important to identify what will continue and ensure that governments provide platforms and all stakeholders create stability and ensure continuity in the relationship.



Session One:

THE STATE OF GLOBAL POWER PLAY

The Ukraine war has massively diminished Russia. This is a lesson for other middle powers to avoid conflict and to focus on more important issues in the 21st century.

The present geopolitical structure has entered other spheres like technology. China looks to dominate strategic technologies of the future because the Chinese see that as the beating heart of future geopolitical power. AI, quantum computing, green hydrogen, are things that China is focused on especially in the Indo Pacific where India is situated.

The Quad is almost all technology. Out of twenty six working groups, twenty three of them are about technology. Through the quad, the Americans look to maintain a generational lead over China.

The next step for the Quad is to bring in other countries, such as European countries into the technology working groups, but not into the formal membership. Governments will play out geopolitics in the tech space and in tech talent. Questions with regard to manpower for artificial intelligence and there are concerns among stakeholders on the states that dominates quantum computing will ultimately dominate cybersecurity.

The US posture in the Middle East has changed as it's attempted to focus more on Asia. The climate crisis has come home, particularly to the West in new ways that's made it an immediate challenge and finally, the issues relating to inflation and potentially

recession, all these shocks, have changed how many of us perceive the world around us.

In the Middle East and more broadly regionally, countries are adapting to these changing geopolitical trends through new multilateralism or in some cases, mini-lateralism, to opportunities in what is inherently a very dangerous period of transition.

With I2U2, each party can see in it what they wish. For the Americans and for Indians it is directed toward China, to counter the competition that China presents. Israel frames this in terms of a crystallization of the anti-Iranian block. And UAE looks at positioning themselves as a global hub for trade between East and West. It is also a way to balance their relationship with China and show that they still value their relationship with the United States. The India Arab Mediterranean food corridor would create connectivity opportunities in terms of infrastructures.

The growing Russian Iranian relationship and in particular, Iran's supply of drones to Russia, the new drone facility inside Russia, and potentially the reports of Iran supplying Russia with cruise and ballistic missiles is an issue that will have, core effects on Israel's national interests in places like Syria.



Session Two:

ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES

While we look at new frontiers where Israel-India business relations can work toward, Israel should be cautious of losing out on their own workforce as they move manufacture and design to India under the Make in India initiative.

India and Israel should work toward collaboration more in smart manufacturing and 3D printing. Another area of strategic collaboration is in natural Food-tech. It is important to note that Israel is fast becoming a hub for meatless and beefless beef. For instance, Symega Food Ingredients, is currently setting up a plant based protein manufacturing unit in Kochi.

As India is a larger country, Israel must consider opening new consulates, perhaps even a trade office in Hyderabad. It is important to push for FTA to address challenges faced by the business community.

Another challenge that requires more clarity is the trade and investment of Indian companies in Israel. There should be more clarity on the (Overseas Direct Investment) ODI and the Overseas Portfolio Investment (OPI) rules of RBI. Also, there is an urgent need to introduce direct flights to harness the business opportunities in India and Israel.

In the water sector, India Israel companies could start a pilot project in a single city. Rainwater Harvesting, treatment of sewage, solutions to recycle should be

implemented to make that one Indian city a model city for water independence. That model should then be replicated across other Indian cities.

Israel must collaborate with India on UAV's as this space will be a big part of the American Indian procurement in the coming years. Unlike the Americans who will not agree to a 100% technology transfer to India, Israel is more flexible, smaller, and ready to work.



Session Three:

ACADEMIC AND R&D

Tel Aviv University looks to collaborate with several institutes in India in the tech and non-tech space. Tech institutes should collaborate closely with the industry whether quantum, food security or water. The idea is to collaborate the universities with Israel and Indian industry.

The India Israel fund holds a significant amount of money and issues concerning the fund should be solved immediately.

There are extraordinary challenges today, as well as opportunities. These challenges are global, be it climate change, sustainable development, biodiversity loss, or supply chains. However, there is also the presence of brilliant people on both sides, educational institutions of quality, and a desire to work together. Unless there is a clear designated leader on either side to take these initiatives forward both India and Israel will not be able to find solutions.

There are three reasons to do Bi-national research with India. First, to collaborate on research. Second, areas like climate research require international collaboration. Third, to take advantage of the outstanding individuals on both sides. To choose people of excellence, India Israel must look to merge the forum with a scientific conference every year and find people who would be interested in India-Israel scientific cooperation.

The beauty of India Israel collaboration is in its stark cultural difference. To find solutions in science it is

important to ask the right questions, and the right questions is a cultural issue. It is important to learn from each other and use it to our advantage.

It is important to re-establish academic linkages beyond a five-year timeline. It is important to look at the future as a forever, because with a time frame of forever, India and Israel can collaborate and deliver something which would be valuable for both countries.

A potential area for collaboration is in medical devices and medical research which Israel has great prowess and can help deepen and push for greater tech sharing.

It would be advantageous to collaborate on the opportunities that datasets in India present. This can be done by energising institutions, not just in Delhi, but in states and cities, as well as tying academic research labs and industry together to work on very specific problems.

Embassy representatives should act as a liaison to deepen relations between the two countries by partnering with academic institutions at the city level. Regional engineering colleges instituted in the hearts of some of these states have a wide talent pool beneficial to India and Israel.

SPECIAL ADDRESS BY SANJEEV SINGLA

Ambassador of India to Israel

A high-level India Israel summit will take place in India in the first half of 2023.

deep into fundamental changing attitudes happening in the Indian tech landscape.

The first major building block regarding work visas for Indian students along the lines of OPT (Optional Practical Training) in the USA has been notified by the Israeli government.



The second major building block, a direct flight from Bangalore to Tel Aviv is held up on the Israeli side.

Within the innovation domain, an Indo-Israeli project will be showcased at India's largest automobile event Auto Expo 2023 in Delhi. An Israeli startup, Phinergy would showcase a Tata Motors electric car powered by an aluminium air battery. This is significant for three reasons: a) it is powered by aluminium which India has in abundance and not by lithium, b) the battery has shown excellent results on all performance parameters and c) this startup already has a joint venture in India with Indian Oil, India's largest oil company.

It would be essential to consider crafting a cyber security piece in light of the recent cyber-attacks in a major hospital in New Delhi.

On academia and future technologies, it is critical to resume the joint funding which the ISF and the UGC for basic research. And similarly, Israel must dive

Session Four:

INDIA AND ISRAEL IN THE REGION

Profound changes are happening at three levels in India and Israel's region. First, deepening cooperation between India and Israel. Second, Israel's changing dynamics with its immediate neighbours. Third, India's changing relationship with Israel's close neighbours.

The Abraham Accords have changed the geopolitical paradigm in the Middle East. The Abraham Accords provide a changed strategic reality and could act as a catalyst for a new geo-economic arrangement in the region.

I2U2 is the logical progression from the strategic trends that go beyond economic relations as the underpinnings of the grouping are not purely economic but lean towards security, digital infrastructure, maritime security and clean energy. The grouping's relations with China have increased concerns and made the grouping's spirit political but the execution has remained apolitical.

I2U2 is also a business connect where in collaboration in terms of using Israeli technology, UAE finance and investment and India's agricultural ability, can instantly help in food security.

India's policy in the region and its relations with the Gulf changed when India stopped looking at the Gulf through the prism of Pakistan. India's rebalance was evident after investing and discovering economic relations with UAE and Saudi. There was a political

recognition that Gulf states had bigger economic opportunities than Southeast Asia.

India has changed its ambitions in the region owing to the growing popularity of the Indo-Pacific dynamics. India is becoming an increasingly important player in Persian Gulf maritime security. Given the intensity of relations with Iran, India can be a constructive player in that respect.

Israel has interests in China but those are restricted because of concerns over China in the International community. The trust between India and Israel is higher because of historical relations in economies and defence. The signing of the India Israel agreement of public security in 2014 is key to this growing bilateral security partnership.

The whole idea of multilateralism has changed. India is increasingly coming round to the view that the existing order, rooted in the UN system, does not reflect India's interests or priorities. Israel should explore the opportunities the Indian Naval symposiums can provide with its historical and strategic interest in the western Indian Ocean. Indian Ocean naval symposium might be a fruitful area for potential collaboration in strengthening the relationship.



Session Five:

FUTURE TECHNOLOGIES

The potential of technology has risen in every industrial sector. As the industry boundaries are blurring, technological inventions are creating technologies that can be applied in cross-industry and ecosystem domains.

Semiconductors will become the most pervasive commodity. Cutting-edge, single-digit nanometer technology and everything in that spectrum will be helpful. In addition, investment in communications, networks for transportation, health, etc, will be helpful for advanced computing for the technological lead bucket.

Quantum computing is progressing at a faster pace and there are multiple areas where we can utilize quantum application. Skilled developers and scientists can provide frameworks for top five industries that link technology, human needs, and business strategies.

Moving forward an area that India and Israel can work together is cyber-attacks. It is important to work towards securing SMEs from data breaches. Securing grounds for the digital ecosystem is a priority. Society and countries will only advance and prosper once they are cyber-secure.

Standardize protocol for manufacturing technologies that improve productivity, reliability, and sustainability. Need an open architecture and standard techniques to develop these algorithms.

Brief Report back on the cyber security workshop:

There is a positive development toward the need to solve the problem on MSME security in India. With the backing of the Forum, a final report will be submitted to the government within the next three years. There is a potential testbed of 10 to 15 companies that the cyber forum could work with in 2023.

The tech ecosystems in both countries will attempt to provide cybersecurity tools to these small companies in India at an affordable price point. It will have to be subsidized initially by the government until it can break even. An action report will be submitted by the end of 2023 to the Forum. The proposal will then be shared with the government for endorsement.



Concluding Remarks

As a people led and not a government led gathering, the India Israel Forum hopes to take forward several of the Forum's initiatives. Aside from political collaboration and trust, economics should

drive the relationship forward. All stakeholders must use the Forum to push for more trade between the two countries.



Public Session on FUTURE TECH AND THE INTERPLAY WITH GEOPOLITICS: WHERE DO INDIA AND ISRAEL STAND?

This year the India Israel Forum organized a public session at The Imperial, New Delhi on *"Future Tech and the Interplay with Geopolitics: Where do India and Israel stand?"* The session was moderated by Nikhil Sawhney, Managing Director Triveni Turbine Limited and Director, Triveni Engineering and Industries Limited.

NAOR GILON

Ambassador of Israel to India

This Forum has been effective on two levels, one government cannot replace the private sector as real work is done by the private sector and second there are a lot of ideas and initiatives that have come out of this Forum.

When India Israel established its relations in 1992, the trade was around \$200 million, today our trade is inching to \$8 billion. Trust is the secret of this special relationship between India and Israel. Today Israel has 40 centres of excellence in agriculture around India, situated in more than 20 states where Israel tries to adapt the right technology to the small farmers.

The future is technology, different aspects of technology, such as quantum and cyber, sustainability, food security, green energy, water biotechnology. The geostrategic changes, through I2U2, can be a model for the world and not just benefit India and Israel.

DANIEL ZAJFMAN*Chair of the Academic Board,
Israel Science Foundation*

Academic relationships between countries is a very easy entry point to build trust and the end result of academic research is one of the most important fuels for economic development.

There is a need to approach the talent in both countries and offer them the ability to work together and build a framework from which we can actually support scientists from both sides. The future of an economy will be an economy of knowledge and an economy of science and technology.

There is a huge advantage for Israel to work with India, because when you do such research, it is not about sharing knowledge between Indian and Israeli scientists, it's about finding solutions together for the future. Science is also dependent on culture. Scientists can solve problems when we can bridge societies, shared cultural values and differences.

ASHISH KUMAR*Co-founder and General Partner of
Fundamentum Partnership*

There are three areas of collaboration and exchanges between India and Israel in terms of the future technology, the first area is in digital technologies.

In India, there are a lot more distribution companies than product companies. However, Israel has created a lot of interesting products

to access markets elsewhere with America being an important market for them. There is an emerging trend wherein Israeli businesses have started reaching out to Indian companies for market access.

The second area where India and Israel are collaborating is in the defence and cyber security areas. The third is in critical technologies. Be it chip design, clean energy and even in agriculture, the pace of the innovation where critical technology and artificial intelligence meet is taking place among early-stage companies between India and Israel. These two geographies, two markets and the extent of their work in future technologies looks promising.

TANVI RATNA*Chief Executive Officer, Policy 4.0*

The speed and scale of ambition and vision coming out of India, with the new generation taking on the new world order that is continuously getting disrupted goes to show that there is so much that India and Israel can do because they are both start-up nations and have the potential to collaborate and help resolve global disruptions.



List of Participants:

ISRAELI DELEGATION

1. **Stanley Bergman**
*Co-Chair, India Israel Forum
Chairman and CEO, Henry Schein*
 2. **Aharon Fogel**
*Co-Chair, India Israel Forum,
Chairman GreenOnyx*
 3. **Noam Eliaz**
*Dean, The Iby and Aladar Fleischman Faculty
of Engineering, TAU*
 4. **Brandon Friedman**
*Director of Research, Moshe Dayan Center for
Middle Eastern and African Studies*
 5. **Naor Gilon**
Ambassador of Israel to India
 6. **Ariel Porat**
President, Tel Aviv University
 7. **Milette Shamir**
*Vice President, International,
Tel Aviv University*
 8. **Ophir Shoham**
*Head of Marius Nacht's Hi-tech Investment
Arm, General Partner, Axon Ventures*
 9. **Eden Shochat**
Co-founder & General Partner, Aleph
 10. **Nathalie Refuah**
General Partner, Viola Growth
 11. **Anat Bernstein Reich**
*Chairperson, Israel-India & Sri Lanka
Chambers of Commerce, CEO, BDO Israel-
India Investment Banking and Consulting*
 12. **Yigal Unna**
*Former Director General,
Israel National Cyber Directorate (INCD)*
 13. **Giora Yaron**
Chairman, Itamar Medical
 14. **Daniel Zajfman**
*Chair of the Academic Board,
Israel Science Foundation*
- ### Observers
15. **Noam Glazer**
Director, Namer Organization
 16. **Konstantin Platonov**
*Asia Engagement Director,
Tel Aviv University International*
 17. **David Kochman**
*Chief Corporate Affairs Officer,
Office of Henry Schein*

18. Shani Rapaport Etsiony

*Head of Public Diplomacy,
Embassy of Israel*

19. Gary Sussman

TAU Coordinator, India Israel Forum



List of Participants:

INDIAN DELEGATION

- 1. Jamshyd N Godrej**
*Co-Chair, India Israel Forum
Chairman, Ananta Centre and Chairman of
the Board, Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing
Company Limited*
- 2. Nikhil Sawhney**
*Co-Chair, India Israel Forum
Managing Director, Triveni Turbine Limited and
Director, Triveni Engineering and Industries
Limited*
- 3. Indrani Bagchi**
Chief Executive Officer, Ananta Aspen Centre
- 4. Kaushendra Sinha**
*Chief Operative Officer, International
Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)*
- 5. Pramit Pal Chaudhuri**
*India Practice Head, Eurasia Group; Foreign
Editor of Hindustan Times and Distinguished
Visiting Fellow, Ananta Aspen Centre*
- 6. Tejpreet S. Chopra**
President, and CEO, BLP Industry. AI
- 7. KRS Jamwal**
Executive Director, Tata Industries
- 8. Prashant Jha**
*Washington DC-based US Correspondent of
Hindustan Times, Senior Editor of HT Premium*
- 9. K Ananth Krishnan**
*Executive Vice President & Chief Technology
Officer, Tata Consultancy Services*
- 10. Ashish Kumar**
*Co-Founder and General Partner,
Fundamentum Partnership*
- 11. Janak Nabar**
*Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Technology,
Innovation and Economic Research (CTIER)*
- 12. Mridula Ramesh**
*Cleantech Investor; Founder, Sundaram Climate
Institute; Author of the critically acclaimed
'The Climate Solution' and now, 'Watershed'*
- 13. Tanvi Ratna**
Chief Executive Officer, Policy 4.0.
- 14. Salil Singhal**
Chairman Emeritus of PI Industries Ltd.
- 15. Ravinder Pal Singh**
*Secretary General and Chief Executive Officer,
World Wide Fund India*
- 16. K. VijayRaghavan**
*Former Principal Scientific Advisor to the
Government of India*

Secretariat

17. Harshit Sehgal

Senior Director, Ananta Aspen Centre

18. Maria Elizabeth Joseph

Programme Officer, Ananta Aspen Centre



Photo Gallery



Vinay Kwatra, Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India addressing the Forum



Prof Ariel Porat, President, Tel Aviv University addressing the Session on Academic and R&D



Sanjeev Singla, Ambassador of India to Israel addressing the Forum



Alon Ushpiz, Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel addressing the Forum



Co-Chairs India Israel Forum



Public Session on “Future Tech and the Interplay with Geopolitics: Where do India and Israel stand?”



15th India Israel Forum, 14th & 15th December 2022

— SUPPORTED BY —



Stanley & Marion Bergman
Family Charitable Trust

