

# **Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs**

Action and Impact in Israel and around the World



## Active despite the Coronavirus Epidemic March–August 2020



### **Dear Friends of the Jerusalem Center,**

The spread of Covid-19 this year crippled many educational institutions, like think tanks, bringing their work to a standstill. The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs remained active, however, even after repeated lockdowns across Israel. In some respects our work really stood out:

- The Jerusalem Center, which has systematically been exposing anti-Semitism over the last two decades, now martialed this experience to show how these same forces were driving forward with what they hoped would become a global Corona conspiracy against the Jewish people and Israel. There were new centers of radical Islamist ideology growing in Canada, which were seeking to spread their ideology to the U.S.
- While the Government of Israel launched its own official contacts with Arab states, like the United Arab Emirates, the Jerusalem Center used Zoom technology to open dialogues with Bedouin leaders in Iraq, Syria, and the Ahvaz (along the northern shore of the Persian Gulf) in Iran. This recalls our initiative in 2013 when the Jerusalem Center maintained a dialogue with a prominent think tank in Jedda, Saudi Arabia.
- As Israel's borders heated up in both the north and south, the Jerusalem Center closely monitored developments within our adversaries' camps, through the original and widely-read analyses by Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Dr. Shimon Shapira. His work was also published by other journals like *Tablet* and *The American Interest*. The importance of his work grew as Hizbullah became the cutting edge of Iranian power projection, not only in Lebanon, but also in Syria and the rest of the Middle East.
- As Palestinian spokesmen continually used the argument that without the resources that the West provided, the Palestinian Authority would eventually collapse and create a new security vacuum, Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser raised the necessary question of what would be the consequence of that finally happening, given the corruption of its leadership and the multiple ways it had been motivating terrorism in recent years. His analysis appeared in the *New York Times*.

 The Jerusalem Center recognizes the importance of effective information delivery in the war of ideas in order to achieve international impact. Our experts regularly share their knowledge with a wide range of institutions such as governments, think tanks, and major media outlets, including France's *Le Monde*, Britain's *Sunday Telegraph*, and the *Washington Post*. The Jerusalem Center quickly adjusted to the new realities brought by Corona and leveraged all possible information platforms including Zoom to promote crucial issues and reach out to all relevant audiences.

The very shape of the international community was clearly changing as a result of the Pandemic. In many corners of the world there was a thirst for the latest Israeli analysis, generally, and the work of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, in particular. Despite the constraints under which we worked, the team at the Jerusalem Center continued to generate research studies that drew the interest of a global community of experts. It is our hope that our work will make a contribution to solidifying many of the new contacts now being made by Israel, defeating our enemies, and forging new alliances for the new era in which we live.



Since 2000, the Jerusalem Center has presented Israel's case to the world: producing top-quality content by leading experts on issues related to Israel's security, its international legal standing, and attempts to challenge its legitimacy and rights in its historic homeland. Much of our scholarly research has been conducted in Arabic and Farsi, making many of our publications cutting-edge.

This report describes how the Jerusalem Center maintains its finger on the pulse of current events and provides fast analysis of the key issues of the day. As described in these pages, the areas of our focus include:

- Diplomacy in the Age of the Coronavirus
  - The U.S. "Vision for Peace" Plan
  - Normalization of Relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates
  - Experts' Briefings Move Online
  - Perspectives on the Impact of the Coronavirus
- Standing Up to Modern Anti-Semitism
  - Joining Forces Against Anti-Semitism in Social Media
  - Countering Anti-Semitic and Anti-Israel Campaigns in Canada
- Our Intelligence Analysts View Regional Middle East Developments
- Our Arab Experts View the Arab World
- Countering the Palestinian Legal Onslaught Against Israel
- Responding to "Israelophobia" and BDS
- Fighting for Israel's Rights in Jerusalem
- Israel's New Minister of Strategic Affairs Consults Jerusalem Center Experts
- Studying the Attitudes of Jewish-Americans toward Israel
- Effective Information Delivery in the Battle of Ideas

### The U.S. "Vision for Peace" Plan

Just prior to the pandemic, on January 28, 2020, Jerusalem Center President **Dore Gold** was invited to the White House for the unveiling of the U.S. "Vision for Peace" plan. Hearing the Jerusalem Center's long-asserted view clearly reflected in the plan – that defensible borders for Israel form a critical element to any realistic approach – provided true vindication. Weeks later at a press conference at the Jerusalem Center on Feb. 9, U.S. Ambassador **David M. Friedman** expressed thanks to Amb. Gold for his important contributions to the U.S. peace plan over the years.

Jonathan Schanzer, senior vice president for research at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, described Gold as someone who "looks at issues that aren't being covered but should be" – the Jordan Valley among them. As Gold told *Tablet Magazine's* Armin Rosen, "I was in it to try to help formulate a plan that would provide a consensus basis for Israel's future borders."

Amb. Dore Gold with U.S. Ambassador to Israel David M. Friedman (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs/ Reuven Ben Haim)



### Normalization of Relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates

After the announcement of the normalization of relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates on August 13, 2020, Jerusalem Center President **Dore Gold** explained the context behind the move to the major world media.

Steve Hendrix began his article in the *Washington Post* on August 15: "In November 2015, **Dore Gold** was doing something no Israeli diplomat had ever done: opening an official government mission in the United Arab Emirates....For Gold and others involved, the breakthrough [in 2020] was the natural culmination of the much quieter courtship."

In Britain's *Sunday Telegraph* on August 16, James Rothwell wrote: "**Dore Gold**, a former adviser to two Israeli prime ministers and Israel's Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2015 -2016, said, 'I think there's an analogy here to what happened in Western Europe after the Second World War. You had former adversaries, France and Germany, being able to pull together under the American umbrella and form an organization called NATO. I see the issue of a mutual threat [from Iran] providing the basis for cooperation between former enemies."

In *Foreign Policy* on August 13, Neri Zilber wrote: "**Dore Gold**, the president of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and a former senior Israeli diplomat noted, 'You won't get someone on a soapbox to say the Palestinian issue is irrelevant, but its profile has dropped significantly in the past 10 years.'"

In the *New York Post* on August 13, Michael Goodwin wrote: "This changes the paradigm of diplomacy in the region," said **Dore Gold**, a veteran Israeli ambassador and former adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "While this doesn't preclude an Israeli-Palestinian relationship, it eliminates the Palestinian veto over Middle East peace."



Amb. Dore Gold and Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Dr. Shimon Shapira in the UAE in November 2015.

### **Experts' Briefings Move Online**

As the coronavirus epidemic blocked the traditional venues for briefings by Jerusalem Center experts, the Center quickly switched to online formats.

- March 26: **Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser, Col. (res.) Michael Segall**, former Iranian minister **Djavad Khadem**, and **Dr. Michael Doran** held an Online Experts' Briefing to discuss "Iran in Crisis: Corona, Sanctions, Uranium." Key findings were published in the Center's *Jerusalem Viewpoints* on April 6.
- April 23: U.S. Anti-Semitism envoy Elan Carr, former Jewish Agency chairman
  Natan Sharansky, and Malcolm Hoenlein, Executive Vice Chairman of
  the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations,
  joined Jerusalem Center experts and the Israel Ministry of Strategic
  Affairs for a Zoom roundtable to discuss "Coronavirus, Conspiracies,
  and Israelophobia: A National Security Challenge?"
- May 3: **Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser** was featured in a Facebook live streaming event on "The New Anti-Semitism and the Threat to Israel's National Security," hosted by the Australia/Israel and Jewish Affairs Council.
- May 6: **Dore Gold** was interviewed by **Chris Matthews** for the European Coalition for Israel on "100 Years Since the San Remo Conference."



May 26: **Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Dr. Shimon Shapira** brought his expert perspective on how an incomplete understanding of Hizbullah's roots and goals hampered Israel's management of its 18-year presence in southern Lebanon that ended 20 years ago, in Israel *Channel 11's* program "The War Without a Name."



- May 27: **Dore Gold** discussed "The Strategic Implications of the U.S. Peace Plan" in a Zoom webcast for foreign diplomats in Israel.
- June 15: **Dore Gold** addressed the AJC Virtual Global Forum 2020 on "The Debate over the Future of the Territories."





CONFIRMED SPEAKER Dr. Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa Secretary General, Muslim World League





TWO ISRAELI PERSPECTIVES An Israeli Policy Debate

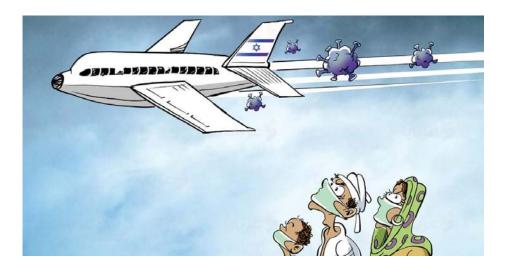
Amb. Dore Gold President of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs Merav Michaeli Member of Knesset, Labor

- June 25: **Dore Gold** addressed a virtual conference on "100 Years after the San Remo Conference: The Prospects for Israel-Palestinian Peace," sponsored by the European Leadership Network (ELNET).
- July 2: **Dore Gold** participated in a Webinar sponsored by the Britain Israel Communications & Research Centre - BICOM. His remarks were published as "Setting the Stage for a Peace Process that Can Work."
- July 29: **Dore Gold** joined a Zoom debate on the U.S. peace plan sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, at which he emphasized the importance of recognizing Israel's rights in any peace process. Other participants included former U.S. Ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk, former Palestinian negotiator Hanan Ashrawi, and moderator Farah Stockman of the *New York Times*.



### **Perspectives on the Impact of the Coronavirus**

Jerusalem Center experts analyze the impact of the coronavirus epidemic on Israel, the Middle East, and the world.



- March 16: "The Coronavirus and the Palestinians," Pinhas Inbari
- March 18: "Enforcing Compliance with Covid-19 Pandemic Restrictions: Psychological Aspects of a National Security Threat," **Dr. Irwin J. Mansdorf**
- March 23: "The Significance of the Coronavirus Epidemic for Israel's National Security," **Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser**
- March 24: "Has the Coronavirus Infected Israelophobes?" Dan Diker
- March 25: "Israel, the Palestinians, Corona and Peace," Amb. Alan Baker
- March 31: "How Hizbullah Is Dealing with the Coronavirus," **Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Dr.** Shimon Shapira
- April 16: "The Impact of Covid-19 on the Middle East and North Africa," **Prof. Hussein Solomon** of South Africa
- April 19: "ICRC Displays Bias on the Covid-19 Crisis in the Middle East," **Amb. Alan Baker**
- April 20: "In the Covid-19 Pandemic, What Are the Reciprocal Israeli and Palestinian Obligations?" **Amb. Alan Baker**
- April 21: "How the Coronavirus Pandemic Has Sparked Anti-Semitic Conspiracy Theories," **Fiamma Nirenstein**

- April 28: "Anti-Semitism and the Coronavirus," **Brig.-Gen. (res.)** Yossi Kuperwasser
- May 5: "Stopping the Spread of the Coronavirus at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem," **Nadav Shragai**
- May 12: "Resilience, Stringency of Restrictions and Psychological Consequences of Covid-19 in Israel: Comparing Jewish and Arab Samples," **Dr. Irwin J. Mansdorf, Drs. Michael Weinberg, Jacob Weinberg** and **Muhammad Mahajnah**

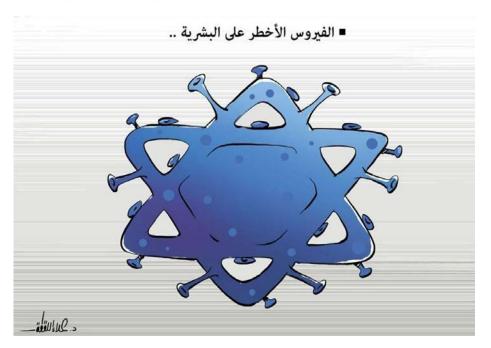


**Fiamma Nirenstein** served as vice president of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Italian Chamber of Deputies and chaired the Committee for the Inquiry into Anti-Semitism at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Her recent analyses include:

July 6: "The Third Wave of Anti-Semitism is on the Way"

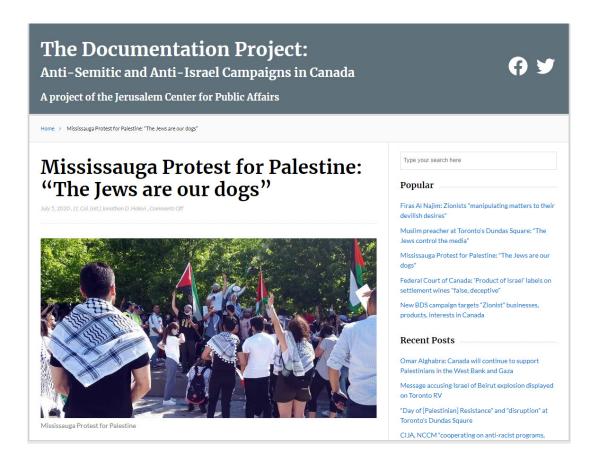
### Joining Forces Against Anti-Semitism in Social Media



On August 11, **Facebook** announced that it was updating its policies against implicit hate speech to include combating anti-Semitism, after the Jerusalem Center joined other organizations calling on Facebook to incorporate the widely accepted International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism in its hate-speech policy.

### **Countering Anti-Semitic and Anti-Israel Campaigns in Canada**

**IDF Lt.-Col. (ret.) Jonathan D. Halevi**, a veteran Israeli intelligence officer and a senior researcher of radical Islam at the Jerusalem Center, who is now based in Canada, has pioneered a project to expose anti-Semitic and anti-Israel incitement in Canada. The project he heads has published hundreds of articles on such incitement.



**Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser**, former Director General of the Israel Ministry of Strategic Affairs and head of the Research Division of IDF Military Intelligence, has written extensively on the issue of applying Israeli sovereignty in parts of the West Bank, the Iranian issue, PA payments to terrorists, and anti-Semitism.



His analyses include:

- May 21: "Applying Israeli Sovereignty to Parts of Judea and Samaria according to the U.S. Peace Plan Implications"
- May 27: "If the PA Lacks Funds to Combat the Coronavirus, It Should Stop Paying Salaries to Terrorists"



July 23: "What If the Palestinian Authority Disbands?"

**Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Dr. Shimon Shapira** is former Military-Secretary to the Prime Minister and chief of staff to the Foreign Minister.



On August 11, 2020, *Tablet Magazine* published Shapira's study, "Inside the Struggle Between Israel and Hizbullah," which detailed Hizbullah's plan to use 5,000 special forces in the Radwan battalions, trained by Iran, to seize lands in the Galilee.



His other recent analyses include:

- April 21: "Hizbullah Makes Clear It Will Strike Israel from Lebanon Even If It Is Attacked in Syria"
- May 18: "Nasrallah: Iran Is Not Pulling Back from Syria"



**Lt.-Col. (ret.) Michael Segall** specializes in analysis of Iranian military strategy and tactics.

His recent analyses include:

- April 5: "Iran Threatens a Bold Response If the U.S. Strikes Iranian-Backed Shiite Militias in Iraq"
- April 19: "The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Navy Confronts the U.S. Navy in the Arabian Sea"
- April 30: "Iran Is Operating an Airlift to Venezuela"
- May 7: *"BBC*: IRGC-Affiliated Mahan Air Is to Blame for Spreading the Coronavirus in the Middle East"



"Corona, we're on your side!"

May 13: "Is Iran Seeking a Historic Compromise with the United States?"

May 27: "Iran Presents the 'Final Solution' – to the Question of Palestine"

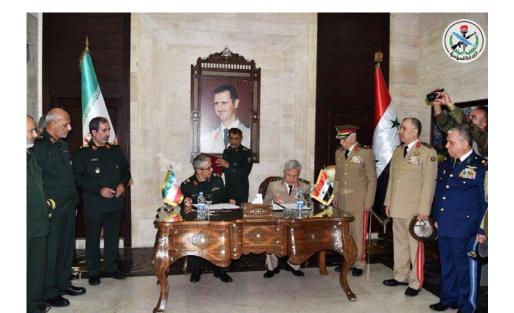
### **Our Arab Experts View the Arab World**

**Yoni Ben Menachem**, a veteran Arab affairs and diplomatic commentator for Israel Radio and Television, is a senior Middle East analyst for the Jerusalem Center.



His recent analyses include:

- March 6: "Israeli expert: 'Increased security coordination with Egypt in Sinai'," *Middle East Monitor-UK*
- March 9: "Saudi Arabia Puts Hamas Activists on Trial for Supporting Terrorism"
- June 17: "Whistleblower Exposes Palestinian Authority Corruption"
- June 24: "Nepotism in the Palestinian Authority Angers the Public"
- June 30: "Conflict Breaks Out Between the Iraqi Government and Pro-Iranian Militias"
- July 14: "Tightening Military Cooperation between Iran and Syria"





Arab Affairs expert **Pinhas Inbari** continues to represent the Jerusalem Center in the Israeli, Arab, and international media. He is seeking to help formulate a new paradigm for the Middle East which aims to formulate a new relationship between Israel and the Arab region, opening new opportunities for Israel. This includes behind-the-scenes contact with senior Palestinian leaders of the Fatah movement at the Jerusalem Center and in Ramallah.

His recent analyses include:

- May 11: "Internal Hamas Tensions May Prevent a Prisoner Release Deal with Israel"
- June 4: "Palestinians in a Quandary How to React to Possible Israeli Territorial Action"

He also plays an instrumental role in enabling contact with a number of influential individuals from a variety of Arab states with which Israel does not have diplomatic relations, who have reached out to the Jerusalem Center.



The Syrian branch of the Federation of Iraqi-Syrian Arab Tribes and Clans



At the request of the Palestinian Authority, the Chief Prosecutor of the **International Criminal Court** is seeking to open a formal investigation into war crimes by Israel's political and military leaders in connection with the armed violence along the separation line between Israel and Gaza. In addition, there is a continuing, concerted Palestinian propaganda campaign aimed at enhancing their status both in international and non-governmental organizations as well as with individual states.



Undermining the International Criminal Court Dore Gold and Alan Baker, eds.





In a response led by **Amb. Alan Baker**, head of the Center's International Law Program and former legal adviser and deputy director-general of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we have been actively countering the ongoing campaigns to delegitimize Israel and its leadership. Using legal and political argumentation, facts, and history, in research papers, video presentations and media interviews, we have sought to expose the ongoing trend to "turn a blind eye" to the Palestinian manipulation and abuse of the organs of the international community.

#### More analyses by Alan Baker:

May 19:	"Can Jordan Revoke Its Peace Treaty with Israel?"
June 10:	"The Trump Plan, Political Wisdom and Double Standards," <i>Jerusalem</i> <i>Post</i>
July 13:	"Sovereignty in the West Bank Areas of Judea and Samaria: Historical and Legal Milestones that Make the Case"

**Dan Diker** is Director of the Jerusalem Center's Project to Counter BDS and Political Warfare.

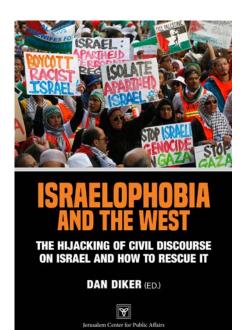
His new study, *Israelophobia and the West: The Hijacking of Civil Discourse on Israel and How to Rescue It*, exposes and contextualizes the intensifying wave of anti-Israel rhetoric that has entered mainstream discourse. The volume includes contributions from Jerusalem Center Fellows as well as **Natan Sharansky** and African, Black American, Arab Israeli and Ethiopian Israeli authors who refute the "racist" and "apartheid" Israel myths. One leading American scholar referred to *Israelophobia* as "the Bible for understanding the new anti-Semitism."

The book's launch was underscored with a YouTube live streaming event together with **Prof. Alan Dershowitz** and Israeli journalist **Ben-Dror Yemini** on Feb. 26.

More analyses by Dan Diker:

July 16: "The Alignment of BDS and Black Lives Matter: Implications for Israel and Diaspora Jewry"







In June, the Jerusalem Center published *The Battle over BDS* – *Trends, Lessons, and Future Trajectories* by **Asher Fredman**, former Chief of Staff and International Affairs Advisor to Israel's Minister of Strategic Affairs, Gilad Erdan.



Jerusalem Center Fellow **Nadav Shragai** has documented Jerusalem for *Ha'aretz* and *Israel Hayom* for over thirty years.

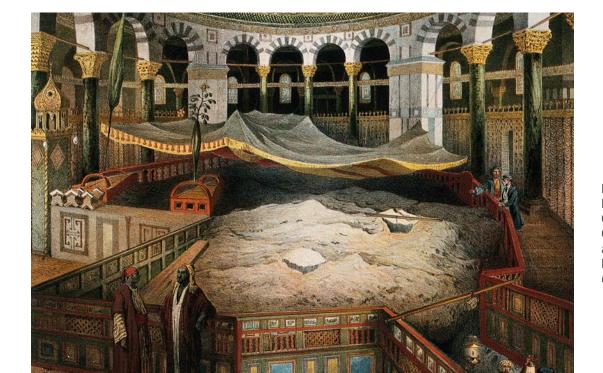
His latest book, published in Hebrew, is *Al-Aqsa Terror: From Blood Libel to Bloodshed*, which explores the Palestinians' (and now the Turks') use of the "blood libel" that the Jews are endangering the Al-Aqsa mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

A section of the book was translated into English and published as *Ancient Muslim Texts Confirm the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem*, presenting the testimonies of esteemed Islamic religious authorities from more than 1,000 years ago.

His recent analyses include:

- June 7: "Jerusalem's Changing Demographics"
- June 15: "Turkey's Intrusion into Jerusalem"
- July 29: "The Western Wall and the Jews: More than a Thousand Years of Prayer"





Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem. Chromolithograph by H. Clerget and J. Gaildrau after François Edmond Pâris, 1862. (*Wellcome Collection. CC BY 4.0*) On July 6, 2020, Israel's new Minister of Strategic Affairs, **Orit Farkash-Hacohen**, visited the Jerusalem Center and met with **Amb**. **Dore Gold, Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser**, and **Dan Diker** to discuss the priorities and policies of her office including Israel's national security, the BDS movement, and public diplomacy.



Left to right: Dan Diker, Orit Farkash-Hacohen, Dore Gold, and Yossi Kuperwasser

### Studying the Attitudes of Jewish-Americans toward Israel

**Dr. Irwin J. Mansdorf** has been studying the attitudes of Jewish-Americans toward Israel through a series of focus groups and surveys starting in the summer of 2018.

On July 21, 2020, the Jerusalem Center published his extensive research on "American Jewry in Transition? How Attitudes toward Israel May Be Shifting." On July 31, Shmuel Rosner published an extensive report on American Jewry for *Maariv* in Hebrew, based in part on the Jerusalem Center report.



The Jerusalem Center has developed one of the most extensive, stateof-the-art, networks of Israel information websites, delivering content in 4 languages (English, Hebrew, French, and German). The Center's websites registered 1,433,725 pageviews in May 2020 by 149,871 unique visitors. The Center maintains a strong and ever-growing presence on social media, including *YouTube* (23,601 subscribers), *Facebook* (16,692 likes), and *Twitter* (24,203 followers). In addition, the Center's *Daily Alert* newsletter is considered the "gold standard" Israel news digest.



The Jerusalem Center utilizes all avenues to deliver its messages in print, social media, and video. We invest resources to populate our written material with appropriate visual and eye-catching photographs, maps, embedded videos, and charts that complement the written word.

Thanks to our extensive video expertise, the Jerusalem Center has been selected as a recipient of the **Genesis Prize** for their global "Speak Out for #Israel" campaign to combat anti-Semitism and efforts to de-legitimize Israel. We will be preparing videos as part of the project: "Three Minutes of Truth: Challenging the Lies about Israel."





The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs is a leading independent research institute specializing in public diplomacy and foreign policy. Founded in 1976, the Center has produced hundreds of studies and initiatives by leading experts on a wide range of strategic topics. Dr. Dore Gold, Israel's former Ambassador to the UN and Director-General of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has headed the Jerusalem Center since 2000.

### **Jerusalem Center Websites**

English: jcpa.org Hebrew: jcpa.org.il French: jcpa-lecape.org German: jer-zentrum.org

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