

NEWSLETTER

FAREWELL AMBASSADOR YAAKOBY

As 2024 comes to a close, we bid farewell to a successful four-year term for our Ambassador, His Excellency Ran Yaakoby.

In 2021, Ambassador Yaakoby and his family arrived in New Zealand. Their arrival was marked by several memorable welcome events, including a historic powhiri at Te Tii Marae in Waitangi. During this ceremony, an olive tree and a kauri tree were planted, symbolizing the growing friendship between the people of Ngāpuhi and Israel. They are among several trees the ambassador planted that continue to grow and flourish across New Zealand!



Ambassador Yaakoby at Te Tii Marae in Waitangi
Photocredit: Perry Trotter

Ambassador Yaakoby, expressed great pride when New Zealand's application to become an Observer at the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) was accepted in June 2022. The following year in 2023, October 7th, was the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust and the beginning of the war on seven fronts. In response, New Zealand designated Hamas and Hezbollah in as a terrorist entities in their entirety this year.

Looking to the future, Ambassador Yaakoby shared his thoughts: "The road ahead is not easy, but with determination and unity, I'm confident that the strong ties between Israel and New Zealand will only grow stronger."

ISRAEL'S FIRST AMBASSADOR TO NIUE



In a historic move, H.E Ran Yaakoby officially became Israel's first Ambassador to Niue. This significant milestone follows the establishment of diplomatic relations between the State of Israel and the Government of Niue on August 1, 2023.

In November, Ambassador Yaakoby presented his credentials to the Prime Minister of Niue, Hon. Dalton Emani Makamau Tagela, during a ceremony at Niue's High Commission in Wellington (pictured).

Israel looks forward to further strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation between the two nations in the years ahead.

DECEMBER 2024

NEWSLETTER



ISRAEL'S FIRST HONORARY CONSUL TO TONGA



(From left to right) The former Prime Minister of Tonga, Hon, Siaso 'Ofakivahafolau Sovaleni Hu'akameiliku, Israel's first Honorary Consul to Tonga James Panuve and Ambassador Yaakoby

A reception for Israel's 76th Year of Independence was held in Nuku'alofa that also marked a farewell for Ambassador Yaakoby from the Kingdom of Tonga.

During this event, a landmark announcement was made:

The appointment of Mr. Semisi Panuve as the first Honorary Consul of the State of Israel to the Kingdom of Tonga, a move that underscores the strong diplomatic ties between the two nations.

Mr. Panuve, also known locally as James, is the former CEO of Tonga Cable Ltd. With his wealth of leadership experience, he is well equipped to represent Israel in Tonga. We extend our heartfelt congratulations and wish him a hearty mazel tov!

NEWSLETTER

A FAREWELL ACROSS NEW ZEALAND

In the previous newsletter, we highlighted the Ambassador's farewell gatherings in Christchurch, Hawkes Bay, and Whangārei. In this edition, we continue to cover his farewell events in Auckland and Hamilton. Ambassador Yaakoby expressed his gratitude to many supporters, while also holding a special farewell over Zoom for those he couldn't meet in person.

Hamilton

A heartfelt farewell dinner was hosted in Hamilton by Bridges for Peace, Christian Friends of Israel, and the Waikato Jewish Association. The evening featured a lively performance by the local Israeli dance group and a delightful spread of delicious treats!



Auckland

The Ambassador had the opportunity to thank long-time supporters at a farewell lunch in Auckland. A special mention to our Honorary Consul of Israel in Auckland, Henri Eliot, who continues to serve the Embassy in Auckland.

Pictured (From left to right): Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Boguslaw Nowak, Yifat Goddard, Ambassador Yaakoby, Mrs. Debora Yaakoby, Karin Horen, Honorary Consul of Israel in Auckland, Mr. Henri Eliot & Revital Merimo Antebi



Farewell Zoom

The Ambassador also expressed his deep appreciation for the opportunity to connect with supporters across New Zealand via Zoom. From Kaitia in the far north, to Hokitika on the west coast, Gisborne on the east coast, and Bluff in the far south, it was a warm and heartfelt gathering in homes all over the country.



DECEMBER 2024

NEWSLETTER

MARKING THE INTERNATIONAL DAY TO ELIMINATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



Israeli hostage Romi Goren was kidnapped from the Nova festival on October 7th 2023.

On the 25th November the Embassy launched a poignant social media campaign, using iconic landmarks in Wellington—such as New Zealand’s Parliament (pictured)—to juxtapose the relative peace of life in New Zealand with the plight of 13 female Israeli hostages still held in the Gaza Strip. The campaign aims to raise awareness of their ongoing suffering and to underscore the stark contrast between our peaceful existence and the horrors they endure.

More than 400 days have passed since Hamas abducted hundreds of civilians from Israel. To date, 100 hostages remain in captivity. These hostages have been denied Red Cross access, and absolutely no contact with them has been allowed. The UN Secretary General’s Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict has reported that there is clear and convincing information that some of the hostages have been subjected to various forms of sexual violence including rape and sexualized torture and that there are reasonable grounds to believe that such violence is ongoing.

The need for urgent action is clear. New Zealand and the global community’s commitments under UNSCR 1325 are to safeguard women and girls in conflict and prevent their victimization. So long as the hostages remain in custody, and continue to be brutalized by Hamas, we are witnessing the failure to uphold UNSCR 1325. We are not only failing Israeli women; we are failing humanity as a whole.

DECEMBER 2024

NEWSLETTER

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AMBASSADOR

On his final day in office, the Ambassador participated in an interview with Sean Plunket on The Platform Radio.

The interview is available for listening on The Platform Kiwi website and YouTube.



As we approach another Hanukkah without our brothers and sisters held hostage in Gaza, we pray for their safe return as we step into the new year.