



THE ISRAEL
DEMOCRACY
INSTITUTE



Ensuring
Israel's
Future

About Us



The Israel Democracy Institute is an independent, non-partisan think tank that devises ways to strengthen the moral and structural foundations of Israel's young democracy.

Israel's leaders confront a daunting array of existential challenges in a reality of near-constant crisis. To help them ensure Israel's democratic future for generations to come, IDI assembles the nation's best minds to develop solutions in the realms of government, national security, Jewish identity, and human rights.

Since its establishment in 1991, IDI has supported Israel's elected officials, civil servants, and opinion leaders in four major ways:

- **A Generator of Ideas:** IDI conducts comparative policy research on the issues critical to Israel's democratic future
- **A Resource for Policymakers:** IDI designs research-based blueprints for reform accompanied by practical implementation strategies
- **A Forum for Debate:** IDI maintains an open forum for constructive dialogue and consensus-building across society and government
- **A Source of Inspiration:** IDI acts to promote the values and norms vital for Israel's identity as a Jewish and democratic state

“ IDI is...a think tank, but it aspires to be a ‘do tank’; it does not just present solutions, it looks for pragmatic ways to achieve them. ”

George P. Shultz

Former US Secretary of State
Chairman of IDI's International Advisory Council

Action



Political and Economic Reform

IDI is the leading authority on political reform in Israel. Our experts work to strengthen Israeli democracy by presenting policymakers with practical recommendations for reforms of Israel's political system and economy. The Forum for Political Reform in Israel is a prestigious working group of former statesmen, civil servants, businessmen and academicians headed by former Chief Justice Meir Shamgar.

National Security and Democracy

IDI works to strengthen Israel's capacity to defend itself within the framework of the rule of law. Our legal experts evaluate Israel's counterterrorist measures; advise the Knesset, the government and law enforcement agencies; and propose innovative

means to fight terrorism in a manner that balances Israel's security needs with the imperative to protect civil liberties.

Religion, Nation and State

IDI seeks to ease tensions within Israeli society by accentuating the common ground between the Jewish and democratic traditions while bolstering the Jewish character of the State. On such controversial issues as conversion, immigration, marriage and human rights, IDI scholars propose innovative solutions based on a rigorous reinterpretation of Jewish sources and five centuries of liberal thought.

Constitutional Values

IDI has spearheaded the movement to enact a constitution for the State of Israel. In addition to

presenting the Knesset with a draft constitution, the Institute is leading a major effort to revise portions of Israel's outmoded legal corpus in accordance with constitutional values. This effort has had a tremendous impact on debates regarding freedom of speech, human dignity, equality and other democratic principles, both in professional circles and in Israeli society at large.

Dialogue and Debate

IDI is the only place in the world where Jews and Arabs, religious and secular Jews, settlers and their opponents, civil servants and representatives of the three branches of government meet regularly to discuss the burning issues facing Israel today. The George Shultz Roundtable Forum brings together academic experts with leading figures from government, business, civil society and the media to exchange ideas in a secure environment.

Action

Impact



Achievements

Since its establishment in 1991, IDI has:

- Led to the founding of the Knesset Research and Information Center
- Produced the leading draft of a constitution for the State of Israel
- Created the Caesarea Forum, Israel's premier economic policy conference
- Led the successful struggle to repeal the two-ballot electoral system

- Drafted the first comprehensive proposal for resolving the tensions between religion and state in Israel
- Instituted the George Shultz Roundtable, a unique forum for constructive dialogue between politicians and opinion leaders from across the political spectrum
- Created The Seventh Eye, the world's first online venue for professional self-criticism by the media

- Championed the establishment of Israel's National Economic Council
- Inspired the creation of a special authority for minority affairs within the Prime Minister's Office
- Promoted the passage of dozens of laws to strengthen national security, combat corruption, defend human rights and defuse religious tensions in Israel

In 2009, in recognition of the Institute's substantial achievements in the first 18 years of its existence, The State of Israel bestowed upon IDI its highest honor: The Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement: Special Contribution for Society and State

Impact

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The images in this booklet are
mosaics discovered in the course of
archaeological excavations in Israel.

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