



Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Helsinki, 11 November 2020

## **70 years of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Finland and the State of Israel**

H.E. Gabi Ashkenazi  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel

Your Excellency,

Today marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Finland and Israel. Finland was among the first countries to recognize the State of Israel in 1949, and our diplomatic relations were established on the 14th of November in 1950. The virtual celebrations start today presenting the history and the positive and lively relations between our countries, our economies and Finnish and Israeli people.

There are a number of similarities between our two countries. We are small, advanced and innovative nations. Our histories have proven that tenacity is a common denominator of our people - "sisu" in Finland and "chutzpah" in Israel. We have both invested greatly in education and people, which has led to success.

I am happy to note that during the decades, our bilateral relations have developed from the trade of paper, timber products and Jaffa oranges to vibrant and broad cooperation in hi-tech, innovations, starts ups, tourism, culture. People-to-people connections are also active. I see potential in developing our cooperation further, including burning global issues like climate change and sustainable solutions.

Living in a peaceful neighbourhood is a prerequisite for sustainable development. Finland has been contributing to the security and stability in the Middle East since our participation to the first United Nations peacekeeping operation in Suez in 1956. Our commitment in the Middle East continues also in this regard.

I look forward to strengthening and deepening the dialogue and cooperation between our countries and people for the years to come.

Sincerely yours,

Pekka Haavisto  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland