

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

EMPLOYEE POST-TRAVEL DISCLOSURE FORM ☒ Original ☐ Amendment

This form is for disclosing the receipt of travel expenses from private sources for travel taken in connection with official duties. This form does not eliminate the need to report privately-funded travel on the annual *Financial Disclosure Statements* of those employees required to file them. In accordance with House Rule 25, clause 5, **you must complete this form and file it with the Clerk of the House by email at gifttravelreports@mail.house.gov, within 15 days after travel is completed.** Please **do not** file this form with the Committee on Ethics.

NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

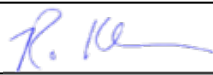
1. Name of Traveler: Zaina Adamu
2. a. Name of Accompanying Relative: _____ **OR** ☐ None
b. Relationship to Traveler: ☐ Spouse ☐ Child ☐ Other (specify): _____
3. a. Dates: Departure: August 12, 2026 Return: August 21, 2026
b. Dates at Personal Expense, if any: _____ **OR** ☐ None
4. Departure City: Washington DC Destination: Tel Aviv, Israel Return City: Washington, DC
5. Sponsor(s), Who Paid for the Trip: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies
6. Describe Meetings and Events Attended: High-level briefings with Israeli national security officials and policymakers
Meetings with current and former Israeli, Palestinian, and American national security decision-makers Off-the-record discussions with Israeli military officials and security practitioners Meetings with Israeli journalists and media professionals focused on strategic communications and public diplomacy
7. Attached to this form are **each** of the following, *signify that each item is attached by checking the corresponding box*:
 - a. ☐ a completed *Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form*;
 - b. ☐ the *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* completed by the trip sponsor **prior** to the trip, **including all** attachments **and** the *Additional Sponsor Form(s)*;
 - c. ☐ page 2 of the completed *Traveler Form* submitted by the employee; **and**
 - d. ☐ the letter from the Committee on Ethics approving my participation on this trip.
8. a. ☐ I represent that I participated in each of the activities reflected in the attached sponsor's agenda. *Signify statement is true by checking the box.*
b. If not, explain: _____

I certify that the information contained on this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Traveler:  Date: September 8, 2026

I authorized this travel in advance. I have determined that all of the expenses listed on the attached *Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form* were necessary and that the travel was in connection with the employee's official duties and would not create the appearance that the employee is using public office for private gain.

Name of Supervising Member: Rep. Ro Khanna Date: 9/8/2026

Signature of Supervising Member: 

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

SPONSOR POST-TRAVEL DISCLOSURE FORM

☒ Original ☐ Amendment

This form must be completed by an officer of any organization that served as the primary trip sponsor in providing travel expenses or reimbursement for travel expenses to House Members, officers, or employees under House Rule 25, clause 5. **A completed copy of the form must be provided to each House Member, officer, or employee who participated in the trip within 10 days of their return.** You must answer all questions, and check all boxes, on this form for your submission to comply with House Rules and the Committee's Travel Regulations. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the denial of future requests to sponsor trips and/or subject the current traveler to disciplinary action or a requirement to repay the trip expenses.

NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

1. Sponsor(s) who paid or provided in-kind support for the trip: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Inc. (FDD)

2. Travel Destination(s): Israel

3. Date of Departure: August 12, 2026 Date of Return: August 21, 2026

4. Name(s) of Traveler(s): Zaina Adamu

Note: You may list more than one traveler on a form only if *all* information is *identical* for each person listed.

5. **Actual amount** of expenses paid on behalf of, or reimbursed to, each individual named in Question 4:

	Total Transportation Expenses	Total Lodging Expenses	Total Meal Expenses	Total Other Expenses (dollar amount per item and description)
Traveler	\$4,278.61	\$3,315.00	\$1,178.27	\$853.19 **See addendum for cost breakdown
Accompanying Family Member				

6. ☒ All expenses connected to the trip were for actual costs incurred and not a *per diem* or lump sum payment.
Signify statement is true by checking box.

I certify that the information contained in this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:  Date: 8/27/26

Name: Clifford D. May Title: Founder and President

Organization: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Inc. (FDD)

☒ **I am an officer of the above-named organization. Signify statement is true by checking box.**

Address: 1800 M St NW, Suite 800S, Washington, DC 20036

Telephone: 202-368-0539 Email: swalsh@fdd.org

Committee staff may contact the above-named individual if additional information is required.

If you have questions regarding your completion of this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103.

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

SPONSOR POST-TRAVEL DISCLOSURE FORM

☒ Original ☐ Amendment

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1. Sponsor(s) who paid or provided in-kind support for the trip: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Inc. (FDD)

2. Travel Destination(s): Israel

3. Date of Departure: August 12, 2026 Date of Return: August 21, 2026

4. Name(s) of Traveler(s): Zaina Adamu

Note: You may list more than one traveler on a form only if *all* information is *identical* for each person listed.

5. **Actual amount** of expenses paid on behalf of, or reimbursed to, each individual named in Question 4:

	Total Transportation Expenses	Total Lodging Expenses	Total Meal Expenses	Total Other Expenses (dollar amount per item and description)
Traveler	\$4,278.61	\$3,315.00	\$1,178.27	\$853.19 **See addendum for cost breakdown
Accompanying Family Member				

6. ☒ All expenses connected to the trip were for actual costs incurred and not a *per diem* or lump sum payment.
Signify statement is true by checking box.

I certify that the information contained in this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:  Date: 8/27/26

Name: Clifford D. May Title: Founder and President

Organization: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Inc. (FDD)

☒ **I am an officer of the above-named organization. Signify statement is true by checking box.**

Address: 1800 M St NW, Suite 800S, Washington, DC 20036

Telephone: 202-368-0539 Email: swalsh@fdd.org

Committee staff may contact the above-named individual if additional information is required.

If you have questions regarding your completion of this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103.

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

TRAVELER FORM

This form should be completed by House Members, officers, or employees seeking Committee approval of privately-sponsored travel or reimbursement for travel under House Rule 25, clause 5. The completed form should be submitted directly to the Committee by each invited House Member, officer, or employee, together with the completed and signed trip sponsor form(s) and any attachments. A copy of this form, minus this initial page, will be made available for public inspection.

This form and any attachments may be submitted at 1015 Longworth House Office Building or travel.requests@mail.house.gov.

Your completed request must be submitted to the Committee no less than 30 days before your proposed departure date. Absent exceptional circumstances, permission will not be granted for requests received less than 30 days before the trip commences. **You must receive explicit approval from the Committee before you depart on this trip.**

Name of Traveler: Zaina Adamu

NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

I certify that the information contained on both pages of this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: 

Name of Signatory (if other than traveler): Zaina Adamu

For Staff (name of employing Member or Committee): House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party

Office Address: Cannon House Office Building, Room 390, Washington, DC 20003

Telephone Number: 202 225 2489

Email Address of Contact Person: jack.payne.martin@mail.house.gov

☒ Check this box if the sponsoring entity is a media outlet, the purpose of the trip is to make a media appearance sponsored by that entity, and these forms are being submitted to the Committee less than 30 days before the trip departure date.

NOTE: You must complete all of the contact information fields above, as Committee staff may need to contact you if additional information is required.

KEEP A COPY OF THIS FORM. Page 2 (but not this page) must be submitted to the Clerk as part of the post-travel disclosure required by House Rule 25. Travel Regulation § 404(d) also requires you to keep a copy of all request forms and supporting paperwork for three subsequent Congresses from the date of travel.

If there are any questions regarding this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103 or via email: travel.requests@mail.house.gov.

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

TRAVELER FORM

1. Name of Traveler: Zaina Adamu
2. Sponsor(s) who will be paying or providing in-kind support for the trip: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies
3. City and State **OR** Foreign Country of Travel: Israel
4. a. Date of Departure: 08/12/2026 Date of Return: 08/21/2026
b. Yes ☒ No ☐ Will you be extending the trip at your personal expense?
If yes, list dates at personal expense: _____
5. a. Yes ☐ No ☐ Will you be accompanied by a family member at the sponsor's expense? **If yes:**
(1) Name of Accompanying Family Member: _____
(2) Relationship to Traveler: ☐ Spouse ☒ Child ☐ Other(specify): _____
(3) Yes ☒ No ☐ Accompanying Family Member is at least 18 years of age?
6. a. Yes ☒ No ☐ Did the trip sponsor answer "Yes" to Question 8(c) on the *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* (i.e., travel is sponsored by an entity that employs a registered federal lobbyist or a foreign agent)?
b. **If yes**, and you are requesting lodging for two nights, explain why the second night is warranted:

7. Yes ☒ No ☐ *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* is attached, including agenda, invitation, invitee list, and any other attachments and Additional Sponsor Forms.
NOTE: The agenda should show the traveler's individual schedule, including departure and arrival times and identify the specific events in which the traveler will be participating.
8. Explain why participation in the trip is connected to the traveler's individual official or representational duties. **Staff should include their job title and how the activities on the itinerary relate to their duties.**
My participation in the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies' media fellowship to travel to Israel is connected to my duties as Deputy Communications Director for the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party because I am responsible for communicating foreign policy and national security issues to the media and the public and this fellowship will provide me with briefings and regional context that will strengthen my ability to develop strong congressional messaging to journalists and the public.

9. **Yes ☐ No ☒ Is the traveler aware of any registered federal lobbyists or foreign agents involved in planning, organizing, requesting, or arranging the trip?**
10. For staff travelers, to be completed by your employing Member:

ADVANCED AUTHORIZATION OF EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

I hereby authorize the individual named above, an employee of the U.S. House of Representatives who works under my direct supervision, to accept expenses for the trip described in this request. I have determined that the above-described travel is in connection with my employee's official duties and that acceptance of these expenses will not create the appearance that the employee is using public office for private gain.

Signature of Employing Member: _____



Date: September 8, 2026

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

PRIMARY TRIP SPONSOR FORM

This form should be completed by private entities offering to provide travel or reimbursement for travel to House Members, officers, or employees under House Rule 25, clause 5. A completed copy of the form (and any attachments) should be provided to each invited House Member, officer, or employee, who will then forward it to the Committee together with a *Traveler Form* **at least 30 days before the start date of the trip**. The trip sponsor should **NOT** submit the form directly to the Committee. The Committee's website (ethics.house.gov) provides detailed instructions for filling out the form. The Committee will notify the House invitees directly of its decision and will not notify the trip sponsors.

NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001. Failure to comply with the Committee's Travel Regulations may also lead to the denial of permission to sponsor future trips. Signatures must comply with section 104(bb) of the Travel Regulations.

1. Sponsor who will be paying for the trip:

Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Inc. (FDD)

2. ☐ I represent that the trip will not be financed, in whole or in part, by a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent. *Signify that the statement is true by checking box.*

3. **Check only one.** I represent that:

- a. ☐ The primary trip sponsor has not accepted from any other source, funds intended directly or indirectly to finance any aspect of the trip; **OR**
- b. ☒ The trip is arranged without regard to congressional participation and the primary trip sponsor has accepted funds only from entities that will receive a tangible benefit in exchange for those funds; **OR**
- c. ☒ The primary trip sponsor has accepted funds, services, or in-kind assistance from other source(s) intended directly or indirectly to finance all or part of this trip and has enclosed disclosure forms from each of those entities.

If "c" is checked, list the names of the additional sponsors: Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies

4. Provide names and titles of **ALL** House Members *and* employees you are inviting. **For each House invitee, provide an explanation of why the individual was invited** (include additional pages if necessary): _____

****see attached addendum**

5. Yes ☐ No ☒ Is travel being offered to an accompanying family member of the House invitee(s)?

6. Date of Departure: August 12, 2026 Date of Return: August 21, 2026

7. a. City of departure: 08/21/2026

b. Destination(s): Israel

c. City of return: Washington, D.C.

8. **Check only one.** I represent that

- a. ☐ The sponsor of the trip is an institution of higher education within the meaning of section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965; **OR**
- b. ☒ The sponsor of the trip does not retain or employ a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent; **OR**
- c. ☐ The sponsor employs or retains a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent, but the trip is for attendance at a one-day event *and* lobbyist / foreign agent involvement in planning, organizing, requesting, or arranging the trip was *de minimis* under the Committee's travel regulations.

9. **Check only one of the following.**

- a. ☒ I checked 8(a) or (b) above; **OR**
b. ☐ I checked 8(c) above but am not offering any lodging; **OR**
c. ☐ I checked 8(c) above and am offering lodging and meals for one night; **OR**
d. ☐ I checked 8(c) above and am offering lodging and meals for two nights. If you checked this box, explain why the second night of lodging is warranted. _____

10. ☒ Attached is a detailed agenda of the activities House invitees will be participating in during the travel (i.e., an hourly description of planned activities for trip invitees). *Indicate agenda is attached by checking box.*

11. **Check only one of the following.**

- a. ☒ I represent that a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent will not accompany House Members or employees on any segment of the trip. *Signify the statement is true by clicking the box; OR*
b. ☐ *Not Applicable.* Trip sponsor is a U.S. institution of higher education.

12. For **each** sponsor required to submit a sponsor form, describe the sponsor's interest in the subject matter of the trip **and** its role in organizing and/or conducting the trip:

****see attached addendum**

13. **Answer parts a and b. Answer part c if necessary:**

- a. Mode of travel: Air ☒ Rail ☐ Bus ☒ Car ☐ Other ☒ (specify: Jeeps)
b. Class of travel: Coach ☒ Business ☐ First ☐ Charter ☐ Other ☐ (specify: _____)
c. If travel will be first class, or by chartered or private aircraft, explain why such travel is warranted:

14. ☒ I represent that the expenditures related to local area travel during the trip will be unrelated to personal or recreational activities of the invitee(s). *Signify that the statement is true by checking box.*

15. **Check only one.** I represent that either:

- a. ☒ The trip involves an event that is arranged or organized *without regard* to congressional participation and that meals provided to congressional participants are similar to those provided to or purchased by other event attendees; **OR**
b. ☐ The trip involves events that are arranged specifically *with regard* to congressional participation. If "b" is checked:
1) Detail the cost *per day* of meals (approximate cost may be provided): _____
2) Provide the reason for selecting the location of the event or trip: _____

16. Name, nightly cost, and reasons for selecting each hotel or other lodging facility:

Hotel Name:	<u>Inbal Hotel</u>	City:	<u>Jerusalem</u>	Cost Per Night:	<u>\$425.00</u>
Reason(s) for Selecting:	<u>Close proximity to site visits and meetings</u>				
Hotel Name:	<u>Sheraton Hotel</u>	City:	<u>Tel Aviv</u>	Cost Per Night:	<u>\$400.00</u>
Reason(s) for Selecting:	<u>Close proximity to site visits and meetings</u>				
Hotel Name:	<u>Galei Kinneret</u>	City:	<u>Tiberias</u>	Cost Per Night:	<u>Night 1: \$504.00; Night 2: \$479</u>
Reason(s) for Selecting:	<u>Close proximity to site visits and meetings</u>				

17. ☒ I represent that all expenses connected to the trip will be for actual costs incurred and not a per diem or lump sum payment. *Signify that the statement is true by checking the box.*

18. **Total Expenses for each Participant:**

☐ Actual Amounts ☒ Good Faith Estimates	Total Transportation Expenses per Participant	Total Lodging Expenses per Participant	Total Meal Expenses per Participant
For each Member, Officer, or Employee	\$4,204.67	\$3,501.00	\$1,330.00
For each Accompanying Family Member			

	Other Expenses (dollar amount per item)	Identify Specific Nature of "Other" Expenses (e.g., taxi, parking, registration fee, etc.)
For each Member, Officer, or Employee	\$806.12	See addendum
For each Accompanying Family Member		

19. **Check only one:**

- a. ☒ I certify that I am an officer of the organization listed below; **OR**
b. ☐ *Not Applicable.* Trip sponsor is an individual or a U.S. institution of higher education.

20. **I certify by my signature that**

- a. **I read and understand the Committee's Travel Regulations;**
b. **I am not a registered federal lobbyist or registered foreign agent; and**
c. **The information on this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.**

Signature:  Date: June 9, 2026
Name: Clifford D. May Title: Founder and President
Organization: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Inc. (FDD)
Address: 1800 M St NW, Suite 800S, Washington, DC 20036
Email: swalsh@fdd.org Telephone: 202-368-0539

If there are questions regarding this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103 or travel.requests@mail.house.gov.

Michael Guest, Mississippi
Chairman
Mark DeSaulnier, California
Ranking Member

Andrew R. Garbarino, New York
Ashley Hinson, Iowa
Nathaniel Moran, Texas
Brad Knott, North Carolina

Deborah K. Ross, North Carolina
Glenn F. Ivey, Maryland
Sylvia R. Garcia, Texas
Suhas Subramanyam, Virginia



ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Thomas A. Rust
Staff Director and Chief Counsel

Jordan Downs
Chief of Staff to the Chairman

David Arrojo
Counsel to the Ranking Member

1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6328
Telephone: (202) 225-7103
<https://Ethics.House.gov>

August 10, 2026

Ms. Zainab Adamu
Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party
390 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Adamu:

Pursuant to House Rule 25, clause 5(d)(2), the Committee on Ethics hereby approves your proposed trip to Israel,¹ scheduled for August 12 to 21, 2026, sponsored by Foundation for the Defense of Democracies Inc. and Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies.

You must complete an Employee Post-Travel Disclosure Form (which your employing Member must also sign) and file it, together with a Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form completed by the trip sponsor, with the Clerk of the House within 15 days after your return from travel. As part of that filing, you are also required to attach a copy of this letter and both the Traveler and Primary Trip Sponsor Forms (including attachments) you previously submitted to the Committee in seeking pre-approval for this trip. If you are required to file an annual Financial Disclosure Statement, you must also report all travel expenses totaling more than \$525 from a single source on the "Travel" schedule of your annual Financial Disclosure Statement covering this calendar year. Finally, Travel Regulation § 404(d) also requires you to keep a copy of all request forms and supporting information provided to the Committee for three subsequent Congresses from the date of travel.

Because the trip may involve meetings with foreign government representatives, we note that House employees may accept, under the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act (FGDA), gifts "of minimal value [currently \$525] tendered as a souvenir or mark of courtesy" by a foreign government. Any tangible gifts valued in excess of minimal value received from a foreign government must, within 60 days of acceptance, be disclosed on a Form for Disclosing Gifts from Foreign Governments and either turned over to the Clerk of the House, or, with the written approval of the Committee, retained for official use.

¹ Please be aware that the Committee's review of the proposed trip does not extend to either the security situation in the destination country or security related to foreign travel in general. We recommend you contact the Office of House Security (OHS) for a safety and security briefing prior to your departure. OHS may be reached at (202) 226-2044 or ohsstaff@mail.house.gov. House travelers should also register for the U.S. State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program at <https://step.state.gov>.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Committee's Office of Advice and Education at extension 5-7103.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Guest". The first letter "M" is large and stylized, with a loop that extends upwards and to the left.

Michael Guest
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark DeSaulnier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark DeSaulnier
Ranking Member

MG/MD:mc

Post-Travel Disclosure Form Addendum: FDD's August 2026 National Security Trip to Israel

Differences from the Trip Sponsor form submitted for Committee approval are reflected below:

Question 5:

- **Transportation Costs:** The actual per-person transportation cost was higher than initially estimated on the Trip Sponsor form. This was primarily due to an increase in bus costs, as we required extra hours on the bus due to a few changes in the schedule. Additionally, the VIP escort service at the airport was slightly more expensive than anticipated, and the Jeep tour in the north was slightly less expensive than initially anticipated.
- **Hotel Costs:** The lodging costs were slightly lower than anticipated as the Inbal Hotel only charged 50% of the room rate for early check-in on August 13, rather than the full rate that we expected.
- **Meal Costs:** The actual meal costs were slightly lower than anticipated for several of the dinners. We have included the updated total cost in the form.
- **Other Expenses:** Below please find an updated list of other expenses. The entrance fees at Kalia beach, the Western Wall tunnels, Druze Gardens, Kfar Aza, and Capernaum were slightly lower than anticipated. The insurance fee was higher as we switched providers and purchased a more comprehensive policy. We also did not spend as much on snacks as anticipated.

Other Expenses:

Identify Specific Nature of "Other" Expenses (e.g., taxi, parking, registration fee, etc.)

Activities and Entrance fees (Yad Vashem, Kalia, CT Exercise, Druze Gardens, Western Wall, Kfar Aza): \$527.73

Insurance: \$188

Refreshments during sessions & Snacks on the bus: \$115.46

Parking/Road tolls: \$22.00

Total: \$853.19

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

ADDITIONAL TRIP SPONSOR FORM

This form should be completed by an organization that provides funds, services, or in-kind assistance to another entity to underwrite, in whole or in part, a trip or an event, meal, or activity that will occur during a trip, or a necessary expense that will be incurred during a trip, with express or implicit knowledge or understanding that one or more House Members or employees may participate in or attend that trip or event, or otherwise may be beneficiaries of the gift or donation. **Provide a copy of your completed form to the primary sponsor of the trip.**

NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001. Failure to comply with the Committee's Travel Regulations may also lead to the denial of permission to sponsor future trips. Signatures must comply with section 104(bb) of the Travel Regulations.

1. Name of Primary Trip Sponsor for this trip: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Inc. (FDD)
2. Name of your organization: Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies
3. Yes ☒ No ☐ Is your organization designated a § 501(c)(3) charitable organization by the Internal Revenue Service?
4. Yes ☒ No ☐ Does your organization receive funding from any foreign government or multinational organization?
5. **Check one.** I certify that my organization:
 - a. ☐ Has provided a grant, gift, or donation to the above-named Primary Trip Sponsor and conducts an audit or review of its grant, gift, or donation to ensure that the funds are spent in accordance with the terms of its grant, gift, or donation. **OR**
 - b. ☐ Has had a direct role in the organizing, planning, or conducting of a trip to
Destination: Tel Aviv, Israel on Date: _____
that is being organized or arranged by the above-named Primary Trip Sponsor. **OR**
 - c. ☐ Has provided in-kind support to the above-named Primary Trip Sponsor (e.g., meeting planning assistance, meeting space and set-up, and paying for expenses related to this trip directly to the service provider).
6. **Check only one:**
 - a. ☒ My organization does not employ or retain a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent **OR**
 - b. ☒ My organization employs a registered federal lobbyist or foreign agent, but their involvement in planning, organizing, or arranging the trip was *de minimis* under the travel regulations.
7. **I certify by my signature that**
 - a. I read and understand the Committee's Travel Regulations;
 - b. I am not a registered federal lobbyist or registered foreign agent;
 - c. I am an officer of this organization and am duly authorized to sign this form; and
 - d. The information on this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____ Date: September 8, 2026

Name: David Rittberg Title: Senior Director

Organization: Schusterman Family Philanthropies

Address: 1250 I Street NW Washington DC 20005

Telephone: 6503804255 Email: drittberg@schusterman.org

If there are questions regarding this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103 or travel.requests@mail.house.gov.



FDD's August 2026 National Security Trip to Israel
August 12-21, 2026

Guides: Iftah Burman and Enia Krivine

Wednesday, August 12

Time	Activity
04:00	Group meets at Reagan National Airport (DCA)
06:02-07:25	Group flight from Reagan National (DCA) to John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) on Flight DL5802
07:25-10:30	Layover at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)
10:30	Group flight from John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) to Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV) on Flight LY 0004

Thursday, August 13

Time	Activity
03:50-05:00	Group arrives at Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV), goes through customs, and retrieves luggage
05:00-06:00	Travel by bus to the Inbal Hotel in Jerusalem
06:00-12:00	Check-in to the hotel and prep for lunch and afternoon activities
12:00-12:30	Walk to independent lunch at The First Station
12:30-13:30	Independent lunch at The First Station
13:30-14:00	Travel by bus to the City of David
14:00-15:30	Survey of national security during early Jewish civilization at the City of David One of the most intractable issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been the question of the future of Jerusalem. Jerusalem's City of David, more than any other site, represents the complexity of this conflict. The City of David came into existence in the days of Abraham as a fortified and impressive Canaanite city, around the famous Gihon spring of ancient Jerusalem. Most archeologists agree this to be the ancient city of

	Jerusalem that later became the capital of the united Israelite tribes under King David. To Jewish Israelis, the site represents the beginning of their physical and emotional attachment to Jerusalem that has continued over three thousand years. The site is also located in a predominantly Arab neighborhood of Silwan. Exploring the City of David and examining its surroundings brings the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to light and helps participants understand the deep ties to Jerusalem and the geopolitical implications of those ties.
15:30-16:00	Walk to the Western Wall Heritage Foundation
16:00-17:00	VIP tour of the Western Wall Tunnels Beneath the streets of Jerusalem's Old City, the Western Wall Tunnels expose the full length of the last remaining retaining wall of the Second Temple, destroyed by Rome in 70 AD. For Israelis and the Jewish diaspora, the site represents an unbroken connection to Jerusalem that underpins Israel's founding narrative. The tunnels run directly beneath the Muslim Quarter, meters from the Temple Mount, making the archaeology here among the most politically charged in the world. During this professionally guided tour, the tunnels served as a lens through which to examine the historical narratives, sovereignty disputes, and religious claims that shape Israeli security policy.
17:00-17:30	Travel by bus to the Inbal Hotel
17:30-18:30	Prepare for dinner
18:30-20:00	Group dinner at the Inbal Hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Friday, August 14

Time	Activity
07:00-09:00	Optional breakfast at the hotel
09:00-10:30	Opening briefing on Israel's multifront war with Amos Harel, Israeli journalist for <i>Haaretz</i> Amos Harel is an Israeli journalist. As military correspondent and defense analyst for Haaretz, Harel has spent the last 25 years covering Israel's ongoing fight against terrorist organizations, its battle with the Palestinian intifada (uprising), and the conflicts with Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon. His published works include <i>The Seventh War: How we won</i>

	<i>and why we lost the war with the Palestinians</i> (2004), <i>34 Days: Israel, Hezbollah and the War in Lebanon</i> (2008), and <i>The New Face of the IDF</i> (2013). Prior to his current role, he worked as general night editor for Haaretz for four years. Harel has also been an anchorman for a weekly radio program about defense issues broadcasted on IDF Radio from 1999 to 2005. Harel has a bachelor's degree in law studies from Tel-Aviv University (1995) and is fluent in English and in Hebrew. In this briefing, Harel offered his assessment of the ongoing regional war between Israel and Iranian proxies, including what Israel has achieved and failed to achieve, and the difficult tradeoffs shaping its military and political decision-making.
10:30-11:00	Travel by bus to the Museum of Tolerance and 30-minute en route briefing with tour guide Iftah Burman on the IDF's intelligence failures on October 7 Iftah Burman, founder of the Middle East Learning Academy, is a Middle East geopolitics expert, and a veteran tour educator of Israel. Iftah speaks with foreign officials, members of the intelligence community and security forces, academics and students. Additionally, Iftah acts as a director of senior-level national-security missions to Israel, of US government officials, US military officers, and think-tank experts. Iftah also provides geopolitical commentary for English speaking news outlets. Iftah is a PhD candidate in Middle East studies, focusing on Hizballah and Syria at the Bar-Ilan University. Iftah received his BA in Political Science and Middle East Studies, and MA in Contemporary Middle East History. During the drive, Iftah Burman briefed participants on the intelligence failures that preceded the October 7 attacks, including how Hamas built and concealed its operational capacity for the assault despite Israel's sophisticated intelligence apparatus. The briefing covered the systemic breakdowns in collection, analysis, and warning that allowed the attack to succeed, and the reforms Israel has undertaken in response.
11:00-12:00	Guided tour of "06:29: From Darkness to Light" exhibit at the Museum of Tolerance <i>06:29: From Darkness to Light</i> exhibition takes visitors on an in-depth journey into the events of October 7th and the profound impact they continue to have on Israeli society. Retrieved from https://motj.org.il/en/exhibition/0629-from-darkness-to-light/
12:00-12:30	Travel by bus to Machane Yehuda Market
12:30-14:00	Independent lunch at Machane Yehuda Market

14:00-14:30	Travel by bus to the Inbal Hotel
14:30-15:30	Briefing with Haviv Rettig Gur on the attacks of 10/7 and the impact on Israeli National Security Strategy Haviv Rettig Gur is senior analyst at The Times of Israel and Middle East analyst at <i>The Free Press</i>, and one of the most closely followed English-language voices on Israeli politics, society, and foreign policy. Born in Jerusalem in 1981 and educated at Hebrew University, he began his career at <i>The Jerusalem Post</i> before serving as director of communications for the Jewish Agency for Israel. He has reported from more than twenty countries and lectured widely on Zionism, Israeli society, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this briefing, Haviv discussed how the attacks of 10/7 reshaped Israel's national security strategy and explored the breakdown of prewar deterrence, the strategic and social consequences of a multi-front conflict, and how Israel is rethinking its approach to Gaza, the wider region, and its key alliances in the aftermath.
15:30-18:00	Prep for dinner
18:00-18:30	Travel by bus to dinner
18:30-20:30	Traditional Shabbat dinner at a family home and conversation with Jonathan Hessen on the Turkish threat. Jonathan Hessen is a senior advisor at FDD. Previously, he was a non-resident senior fellow in the Center for Peace and Security in the Middle East at Hudson Institute. He specializes in geostrategy and security issues related to the Middle East and Europe. Participants joined a traditional Shabbat dinner hosted at a private family home in Israel, where Jonathan led a discussion on Turkish hostilities to Israel and partners in the region. He explored Ankara's shifting strategic ambitions, its ties to Israel's adversaries, and the implications of an increasingly assertive Turkey for Israeli national security and the broader Middle East.
20:30-21:00	Travel by bus to hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Saturday, August 15

Time	Activity
07:00-08:00	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:00-08:15	Travel by bus to Haas Promenade
08:15-09:00	Strategic Depth Overview of Jerusalem with Iftah Burman at Jerusalem Overlook Jerusalem is of immense strategic importance for the State of Israel's national security posture. At this briefing, participants received an overview of Israel's topography, border threats, and security imperatives with respect to the greater Jerusalem envelope.
09:00-09:10	Photo at Jerusalem Overlook
09:10-09:30	Travel by bus to the Old City of Jerusalem
09:30-11:45	Explore the diversity and security installations of the Old City of Jerusalem with Iftah Burman The Old City of Jerusalem is home to the holiest shrines of the three monotheistic religions, including the Temple Mount, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Holy Basin is the historic location of Jerusalem and refers to the land surrounding the Old City, including the Mount of Olives, believed to be the departure point for Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem and the cemetery where Jews have been burying their dead for 2,500 years. The Holy Basin also includes the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest site, and the Temple Mount, sacred ground for Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Control over these sensitive areas remains among the largest disputes in the Middle East. The professionally guided survey walked participants through these sites and others, educating them about their historical impact and their role in today's political discussions.
11:45-12:30	Independent lunch in the Old City of Jerusalem
12:30-13:30	Travel by bus to Qaser El-Yehud , traditional site of Jesus' Baptism
13:30-14:00	Explore Israeli-Jordanian military cooperation at Qaser El-Yahud, traditional site of Jesus' Baptism According to Christian tradition, Qaser El-Yahud is the site where John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan. It is one of the holiest sites in the Christian world. The site includes monasteries, churches, and lands belonging to eight different Christian denominations. The site sits along the Jordan river, which serves as the border between Israel and Jordan. The border is so narrow, that while standing on the Israeli side of the site, one can speak with Jordanian soldiers on the Jordanian side.

	Participants learned about Israeli-Jordanian military cooperation and border security while visiting this site.
14:00-14:30	Travel by bus to Kalia Beach
14:30-16:00	Explore water and border security dynamics along the Jordan Valley at Kalia Beach, at the Dead Sea For decades, Israel has been developing the agricultural potential of the desert. While the Middle East is suffering from water shortages, Israel, through modern technology and water conservation policies, including the recycling of over 80 percent of water used for domestic purposes and transferring it to agriculture, has “made the desert bloom.” The key regional players also face serious environmental issues in the Dead Sea region. One of the major environmental concerns is the receding of the Dead Sea and the appearance of sinkholes, which cause the earth above to collapse. Participants received a briefing on these issues, which have led to unprecedented cooperation between Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians and serve as a model for regional cooperation.
16:00-17:00	Travel by bus to the hotel
17:00-18:00	Prep for dinner
18:00-18:30	Travel by bus to dinner at the American Colony Hotel
18:30-19:00	Briefing on the Palestine Liberation Army, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Hamas with Iftah Burman Iftah Burman discussed various Palestinian factions/entities and their histories, policies, and current political standing providing helpful background to participants before the evening’s discussions.
19:00-20:00	Dinner briefing on Palestinian statehood with Rami Nazzal, Palestinian-American Journalist and Activist at the American Colony Hotel Rami Nafez Nazzal is a Palestinian-American and the son of Drs. Nafez and Laila Nazzal. As a child, he traveled extensively with his parents while they taught at world-renowned universities, developing an early insight into the cultures of the world. He attended the Anglican International School in West Jerusalem before earning a degree in Business Management and Tourism from the University of Utah in 2003. After seven years in Boston, he returned to Jerusalem with a clear goal: to be a force for peace and understanding in one of the most complex regions in the world. A seasoned journalist, Rami has written for outlets including <i>The New York Times</i>, <i>TIME</i>, <i>Reuters</i>, <i>Der Spiegel</i>, and <i>The Mail on Sunday</i>. Nazzal briefed participants on the prospect of Palestinian

	Statehood amid broader regional tensions and a shifting geopolitical landscape.
20:00-20:15	Short break
20:15-21:15	Dessert briefing on the Israeli Arab community with Khaled Abu Toameh, journalist and Middle East expert at the American Colony Hotel Khaled Abu Toameh is an award-winning journalist and TV producer who covers Palestinian affairs for The Jerusalem Post. He previously worked as a senior producer for NBC in the Middle East and has reported on events in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for several media outlets. Khaled briefed participants on Israel's Arab population, reporting and the media in Israel, and other topics of interest.
21:15-21:45	Travel by bus to hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Sunday, August 16

Time	Activity
07:00-08:15	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:15-08:30	Check out of the Inbal Hotel
08:30-09:30	Briefing with Matti Friedman, Canadian-Israeli journalist, at the Inbal Hotel's Galil Hall on the current war in Israel and Israel through the global lens Matti Friedman is the author of five works of nonfiction that have been translated into more than a dozen languages. His newest book is <i>Out of the Sky: Heroism and Rebirth in Nazi Europe</i> (March 2026). Matti's work as a reporter has taken him from Israel to Lebanon, Morocco, Moscow, the Caucasus, and Washington, DC. A former Associated Press correspondent, his work has appeared in the <i>New York Times</i>, <i>Smithsonian Magazine</i>, the <i>Atlantic</i>, and elsewhere. He currently writes from Israel for <i>The Free Press</i>. Matti was born in Toronto and lives in Jerusalem with his family. Friedman drew on his experience as a foreign correspondent to examine how the current conflict is being reported and why understanding Israel's security requires zooming out beyond Gaza and the West Bank to the broader Middle East. He also discussed his assessment of what that wider lens reveals about the stakes of the current war.

09:30-10:00	Travel by bus to Yad Vashem
10:00-11:30	VIP tour at Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial Museum To understand how Israelis view national security, one must understand the trauma of the Holocaust. Israelis view threats to Israel's destruction in light of the events of the 1930s and 1940s when the German Reich's threats to exterminate the Jewish people were not taken seriously by the international community. By visiting the museum, participants gained an understanding of how Israelis interpret the threat of an Iranian nuclear program and Iran's commitment to Israel's destruction. Yad Vashem has become a symbol of the Jewish people and its transformation from total helplessness to self-reliance and strength. A visit to Yad Vashem provides historical context for the Jewish state. A professional docent from the museum guided the participants through the museum's main exhibit and the children's memorial.
11:30-12:30	Independent lunch at Yad Vashem , Israel's Holocaust Memorial Museum
12:30-13:15	Travel by bus to Har Adar
13:15-14:15	Briefing on Israeli settlements and security concerns at Har Adar with Oded Revivi, former mayor of Efrat settlement Revivi offered a ground-level perspective on the security challenges facing Israeli communities in the West Bank, drawing on his experience as both a local official and a leading voice in the international sphere. The discussion addressed how October 7 and the subsequent war have reshaped the security environment in the West Bank, the relationship between settlement policy and Israel's broader strategic depth, and the diplomatic pressures bearing on the future of the region.
14:15-15:30	Travel by bus to Tel Aviv
15:30-18:00	Check in to Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv Hotel and prep for evening briefings and dinner
18:00-19:00	Briefing with DHS attaché Marc Zimmermann on US-Israel cooperation during times of war Marc Zimmermann is a career law enforcement and security professional with a distinguished record of leading multidisciplinary teams across the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to deter, disrupt, and dismantle transnational criminal and terrorist organizations. He currently serves as the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Regional Attaché in Tel Aviv, Israel, leading HSI operations across 15 countries throughout the Levant and Northeast Africa. Previously, Mr. Zimmermann served as Division Chief for the Eastern Hemisphere at HSI Headquarters, responsible for all HSI operations and personnel across

	Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. In this role he spearheaded engagement with the People's Republic of China which led to the establishment of the HSI-led US/China Transnational Crime Working Group.
19:00-19:30	Travel by bus to dinner and 30-minute en-route briefing with Iftah Burman on Israeli "Startup Nation" Israel is known as the "startup nation" due to their strong embrace of entrepreneurship across multiple sectors. As national security challenges evolve and the war against Hamas continues, this approach poignantly applies to Israel's defense sector and has resulted in more firms developing new strategies and technologies to better protect the nation.
19:30-21:00	Dinner with Israeli national security startup professionals in Tel Aviv This dinner briefing featured representatives from multiple firms within Israel's defense startup ecosystem, from traditional aerospace to cyber, counter-UAS, electronic warfare resilience, LiDAR robotics, and AI. Each representative discussed how their company supports various national security initiatives (domestically and abroad).
21:00-21:30	Drive back to hotel
Overnight	Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv Hotel Address: 115 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv, Israel, 63573 Phone: 972-3-5211111

Monday, August 17

Time	Activity
07:00-08:00	Breakfast at the hotel
08:00-10:30	Travel to Kerem Shalom and 1.5-hour briefing from Iftah Burman on IDF liaison units and cooperation with Israel's neighbors During the drive to Kerem Shalom, tour guide Iftah Burman briefed participants on the IDF's liaison units, the largely quiet infrastructure through which Israel's military maintains working relationships with neighboring states. These units have played a critical role in coordinating humanitarian aid, managing border crossings, and sustaining back-channel communication with Jordan, Egypt, and Palestinian counterparts throughout the current war.
10:30-11:40	Briefing from IDF representative on border crossing operations into Gaza and aid diversion from Hamas at Kerem Shalom Crossing

	Kerem Shalom Crossing is the primary crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The Crossing is managed and operated by the Crossings Administration at the Ministry of Defense and is intended to allow the passage of goods between Israel and the Strip. The Crossing is situated next to Kibbutz Kerem Shalom, in the tri-border area between Israel, Egypt, and the Gaza Strip. In recent years, following the closure of the Karni Crossing, the Kerem Shalom Crossing has become the sole passageway for goods. The Crossing is situated next to the town of Kerem Shalom, about 4 km west of Rafiah in the Strip. <i>Retrieved from https://www.gov.il/en/departments/general/shalom</i> Participants received a briefing from an IDF representative at Kerem Shalom on border crossing operations and the persistent challenge of aid diversion by Hamas, including Israeli efforts to monitor, secure, and maintain humanitarian access while preventing exploitation of aid flows by designated terrorist organizations.
11:40-12:10	Travel by bus to site of the Supernova Music Festival in Re'im The Supernova Music Festival in Re'im was one of Hamas' primary targets in the brutal massacre that took place on October 7 in the Gaza envelope.
12:10-13:05	Battleground walkthrough of the Nova Music Festival Memorial in Re'im with former IDF Lt. Col. Amir Goren Lt. Col. (Ret.) Amir Goren, veteran and security expert, offers 42 years of military insights. CEO of GSA Security Group and founder of the International Institute for Migration and Security Research, Goren's lectures blend personal stories with practical lessons, equipping audiences to face modern challenges. Goren's years in the military were spent on the IDF's High Level Negotiation Team, where he specialized in combat roles and counterterrorism. He has instructed at the IDF School of Counterterrorism. Lt. Col. Goren commanded a battalion that fought at the Nova Music Festival site on October 7—he walked participants through his operational experiences that day and shared both tactical and personal takeaways from the most difficult day in Israel's history.
13:05-13:20	Travel by bus to Kibbutz Kfar Aza
13:20-14:00	Lunch at Kibbutz Kfar Aza
14:00-15:30	Briefing at Kibbutz Kfar Aza with Shachar Shnurman on community resiliency

	Shachar Shnurman was born in Kibbutz Shuval, located in the southern periphery of Israel. During his military service in the IDF, he served as a sniper and became an expert marksman. Over the past 20 years, he has held various logistics positions within different Kibbutz industries. He moved to Kibbutz Kfar Aza 20 years ago, and in 2015, founded the Kfar Aza Whiskey Club, which holds bi-monthly meetings. Tragically, on October 7, 2023, the club lost two of its members who were brutally killed. Two months after the attack, Shachar and his wife were the first to return to their home in the kibbutz. To foster unity and provide comfort to the community, they began hosting weekly BBQs for residents, soldiers, and volunteers. This initiative quickly became the main gathering place in the kibbutz. Participants visited Kibbutz Kfar Aza, one of the communities most devastated by the October 7 attacks, for a briefing on Israeli resiliency and the experience of life along the Gaza border. The briefing drew on the kibbutz's own story of destruction and rebuilding as a lens into the broader resilience of Israeli border communities in the face of persistent threat.
15:30-16:00	Travel by bus to Assaf Siboni Lookout The Assaf Siboni Scenic Lookout is a memorial observation point near Kibbutz Nir Am in southern Israel. Built for IDF soldier Assaf Siboni who died in the 1997 Helicopter Disaster, it features 20 wind chimes representing his years of life and overlooks the Nir Am reservoir and the Gaza Strip.
16:00-17:00	Assaf Siboni Lookout Briefing with Lt. Col. (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi Lieutenant Colonel (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi is an IDF battalion commander, venture capitalist, and lecturer. Erez served in IDF Paratrooper Brigade 646 as a battalion commander during the "Iron Swords" War, leading full-scale ground operations across Gaza, Lebanon, and the West Bank. He commanded some of the war's most daring and complex assaults through Urban terrain. In civilian life, he is the CEO of Epic Endeavor Venture Capital and a lead lecturer in Business Strategy at Tel-Aviv University. Participants received a geographical briefing on Hamas' October 7 attacks from IDF Lt. Col. (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi at Assaf Siboni Lookout, an elevated lookout point overlooking the communities and terrain targeted that morning. Lt. Col. Yerushalmi walked participants through the attack routes, the scale of the assault, and the tactical and strategic context of the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust.

17:00-19:15	Travel by bus to Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv
19:15	Independent dinner and evening in Tel Aviv
Overnight	Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv Hotel Address: 115 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv, Israel, 63573 Phone: 972-3-5211111

Tuesday, August 18

Time	Activity
07:00-08:45	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:45-09:00	Check out of Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv Hotel
09:00-09:30	Travel by bus to the Kiry and en-route briefing on the IDF's organizational structure En route to the Kirya, participants received a 30-minute briefing from tour guide Iftah on the IDF's organizational structure and the role of Israel's military headquarters in coordinating operations across commands. The briefing provided context for the meeting ahead at the Kirya.
09:30-09:45	Security check at the Kiry
09:45-10:45	Briefing at the Kiry with Lt. Col. Jonathan Nevo Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Nevo serves as head of the international strategic division in the planning directorate of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), where he focuses on international strategic planning, defense policy, and military cooperation with foreign partners. Lt. Col. Nevo has held a variety of positions in strategic planning, intelligence and international affairs within the IDF and MOD. He holds a master's degree from Tel Aviv University and regularly contributes to professional military discourse through articles and policy papers on strategy, international security, defense planning, and regional affairs. His publications have appeared in professional military forums, including Ma'arachot, and think tanks, such as the Institute of National Security Studies. At this briefing, Lt. Col. Jonathan Nevo discussed Israel's force posture, national security strategy, and regional alliances.
10:45-11:15	Walk to briefing at Azrieli Sarona Tower meeting room

11:15-12:15	Briefing with BG (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel at Azrieli Sarona Tower on Israeli counterterrorism strategy and a strategic overview of Israel's threat landscape Brig. General (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel is currently a fellow at the International Institute for Counterterrorism at Reichman University. From 2007-2012, he was the director of the Counterterrorism Bureau at the Prime Minister's Office, where he implemented cyber, cargo, aviation, border protection, and public security technologies. During the Second Lebanon War, Nuriel served as a deputy division commander of the 91st division. Across his military career, he has held roles as a military attaché at the Embassy of Israel in Washington, D.C., J-3 of Northern Command, deputy director of the Gaza Strip division, and commander of a territorial brigade in the West Bank. He holds a bachelor's degree and master's degree in political science and national security from the University of Tel Aviv and the University of Haifa, respectively. Drawing on his experience coordinating Israeli counterterrorism policy at the highest levels of government, Nuriel provided a strategic overview of Israel's current threat landscape and the Israeli government's approach to counterterrorism strategy prior to the counterterrorism training exercise.
12:15-13:00	Walk to lunch at Sarona Market
13:00-14:00	Independent lunch at Sarona Market
14:00-16:45	Travel by bus to counterterrorism training
16:45-18:45	Counterterrorism Training Exercise with Parabellum Parabellum offers a unique tactical experience providing an authentic glimpse into the world of special forces within Israel's security system. Designed and led by veterans of elite units and the intelligence community, the activity combines values-driven content with hands-on physical engagement and operational thinking. Participants step into the shoes of Israeli special forces soldiers for an experiential counterterrorism training exercise, discovering Israeli tactics to defend the homeland and gaining a deeper understanding of why the IDF fights, and how its special forces are structured and operate. Guided into a focused "military mode," participants experience teamwork, discipline, and decision-making under pressure, all within a controlled, professional, civilian-adapted environment.
18:45-19:00	Travel by bus to Galei Kinneret Hotel
19:00-19:45	Check into Galei Kinneret Hotel and prep for dinner

19:45-21:15	Group dinner at hotel and moderated debrief on the counterterrorism training exercise The group used this opportunity to give participants the chance to reflect on the counterterrorism training exercise and share what they learned, including observations and possible policy implications.
Overnight	Galei Kinneret Hotel 1 Eliezer Kaplan Street, Tiberias, Israel +972 04-670-7070

Wednesday, August 19

Time	Activity
07:00-08:30	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:30-09:00	Travel by bus to Kibbutz Ginosar boat dock
09:00-10:05	Boat ride briefing on the strategic importance of the Golan and Sea of Galilee While sailing on the Sea of Galilee, participants received a 45-minute briefing from tour guide Iftah Burman on the strategic importance of the lake to Israel. Serving as roughly a third of Israel's freshwater supply, the Sea of Galilee sits at the center of a broader competition over water resources that has shaped Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Jordanian relations for decades. The Golan Heights, visible from the water, were seized by Israel in 1967 during the Six-Day War in part to secure this resource and, critically, to eliminate a direct Syrian pathway into Israeli territory via the lake.
10:05-10:35	Guided tour of the ancient city of Capernaum Capernaum has been inhabited, destroyed, rebuilt, and fought over continuously for more than two millennia. The layered ruins tell that story: a first-century synagogue, rebuilt in the fourth century, overlaid by a Byzantine church, abandoned under Ottoman neglect, and excavated and preserved under Israeli sovereignty. During this tour, participants gained a ground-level view of why the Galilee region has been strategically contested for two millennia, and why it remains strategically important today.
10:35-11:15	Travel by bus to Merom Golan
11:15-13:30	Geopolitical Jeep Tour with Capt. (Res.) Ilan Shulman on Strategic Importance of the Golan Heights and Confronting Threats from Syria.

	Captain (Res.) Ilan Shulman, a disabled IDF veteran, divides his time guiding geopolitical tours on the Golan Heights, lecturing to students, giving geopolitical briefings for delegations through various Israeli foreign ministry programs, and fulfilling his IDF reserve duties in the Northern Command's intelligence unit. Shulman was raised in Kibbutz Merom Golan near Israel's border with Syria, where one of his favorite jobs was herding the kibbutz cattle. Shulman served in the IDF's Paratroopers Brigade, rising to the position of company commander. He holds a B.A. in Israel and Middle East Studies. From the high ground of the Golan, Shulman walked participants through the terrain that has defined Israel's northern defense posture for decades. The briefing also addressed the dramatic shifts in Syria following Assad's fall, the new actors now operating along Israel's northern border, and what the post-Assad landscape means for Israeli deterrence and freedom of operation in the Syrian theater.
13:30-13:50	Travel by bus to Gilabun
13:50-14:45	Group lunch at Gilabun
14:45-15:30	Travel by bus to Jordan/Syria overlook
15:30-16:05	Briefing with Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus at Jordan/Syria overlook Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus is a senior fellow at FDD focused on the Middle East. He served in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) for 24 years as a combat commander in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. He also served as a military diplomat, foreign relations expert, and international spokesperson. He recently retired as lieutenant colonel. Jonathan was the first Israeli officer to be seconded to the United Nations (UN), during which he provided military and strategic analysis for UN peacekeeping forces. He has directed social media and public diplomacy efforts and has extensive on- and off-camera experience from his years as a spokesperson. From this vantage point, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus briefed participants on the status of Israel's relationships with its two eastern neighbors, Jordan and Syria. Conricus addressed how Israel is managing both complex relationships simultaneously during wartime, with the Jordan-Israel relationship serving as a fragile but functional partnership, while the Syria-Israel relationship remains an open question with significant implications for regional stability.
16:05-17:15	Travel by bus to the Galei Kinneret Hotel
17:15-19:00	Prep for dinner

19:00-19:30	Travel by bus to dinner at Magdalena
19:30-21:15	Dinner briefing on strategic communications during Israel's multifront war with Lt. Col (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus During dinner, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus, former IDF international spokesman, briefed participants on how Israel has navigated strategic communications across a multi-year, multifront war. With simultaneous operations in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and now direct confrontations with Iran, Israel has faced the challenge of explaining complex, fast-moving military actions to international audiences with competing interests and limited context. Conricus drew on his firsthand experience managing that information environment to discuss what effective military communications looks like under pressure, where Israel has succeeded and fallen short, and what the implications are for U.S. policy and public support.
21:15-21:30	Travel by bus to the hotel
Overnight	Galei Kinneret Hotel 1 Eliezer Kaplan Street, Tiberias, Israel +972 04-670-7070

Thursday, August 20

Time	Activity
07:30-08:45	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:45-09:00	Check out of Galei Kinneret Hotel
09:00-10:20	Travel by bus to IDF Regional Brigade 769
10:20-11:00	Briefing at IDF 769th Regional Brigade Participants received a briefing at IDF Regional Brigade 769 headquarters from senior military officers responsible for Israel's northern front. The briefing addressed Israeli force posture and operational doctrine along the Lebanon and Syria borders, the evolving threat environment in the post-October 7 period, and the IDF's approach to deterrence and defense in depth against Hezbollah and Iranian-backed forces in the region.
11:00-11:45	Travel by bus to Adir Cafe
11:45-13:45	Lunch at Adir Café and 90-minute Lebanon briefing with Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus

	Set against the landscape of the western Galilee, within sight of the Lebanese border, participants received a briefing from Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus on the Lebanon threat. Drawing on his years as the IDF's international spokesman during active operations in the north, Conricus walked through Hezbollah's military buildup, its integration into Iran's regional axis, and the strategic calculations behind Israel's 2024 campaign in Lebanon. The briefing assessed the current state of the ceasefire, the durability of Israeli deterrence along the northern border, and what the Lebanon case reveals about the future of proxy warfare in the Middle East.
13:45-15:00	Travel by bus to Dalyat El-Carmel and 30-minute en-route briefing on Israel's minority communities En route to Dalyat El-Carmel, Iftah Burman gave participants an overview of Israel's minority communities, including Arab citizens, Druze, Bedouin, and Circassian, and their distinct relationships with the Israeli state. The briefing covered legal status, military service, political representation, and the fault lines that have sharpened since October 7, providing context for the community visit ahead.
15:00-16:30	Coffee briefing with a Druze community leader at Dalyat El-Carmel Over coffee in one of Israel's largest Druze villages, participants heard directly from a community leader about Druze identity, the tradition of military service in the IDF, and what October 7 and the subsequent northern campaign have meant for a community that straddles the Israel-Lebanon border in ways few others do.
16:30-17:30	Travel by bus to dinner at Hellena Restaurant
17:30-18:15	Group debrief and feedback at Hellena Restaurant We used this opportunity to discuss the speakers and topics we were exposed to throughout the trip. We also gave the participants an opportunity to provide feedback to FDD staff on their trip experience.
18:15-19:30	Closing dinner and briefing on the U.S.-Israel relationship with Eyal Hulata Eyal Hulata is a senior international fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) and was the first foreign visiting fellow at FDD headquarters. From July 2021 to January 2023, Eyal served as Israel's national security advisor and head of Israel's National Security Council (NSC). Eyal served under Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Prime Minister Yair Lapid. During his tenure, Eyal coordinated the national effort on Iran, coordinated the maritime border agreement with

	Lebanon, and co-headed the Strategic Consultation Group with his American counterpart, Jake Sullivan. Between February 2021 and July 2021, Eyal served as the chief product officer of the Israeli fintech company PAGAYA and entered the field of Climate Tech. Earlier in his career, Eyal served for more than 20 years in Israeli national security roles. For his achievements, Eyal was awarded the prestigious Israeli Defense Award. Eyal is a graduate of the Israel Defense Forces elite technology leadership program “Talpiot,” with a B.S. in physics from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He also holds a PhD in physics from Tel Aviv University and an M.A. in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School.
19:30-21:00	Travel by bus to Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV)

Friday, August 21

00:30-05:15	Flight from Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV) to Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) on LY0027
06:00-08:15	Group layover at Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR)
08:15-09:45	Flight from Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) to Reagan National Airport (DCA) on UA 3501.
09:45	Conclusion of trip

Q 4: Provide names and titles of ALL House Members and employees you are inviting. For each House invitee, provide an explanation of why the individual was invited (include additional pages if necessary):

FDD's August 2026 National Security Trip to Israel is a seven-day trip that offers a fact-based, nuanced understanding of a country that faces unique national security challenges. Throughout the week, trip participants will travel around Israel to participate in off-the-record high-level meetings with Israel's top national security brass; journalists; military officials; and leaders in the private sector. These in-depth conversations will be supplemented by experiential exercises, including visits to elite military installations and a hands-on training exercise.

FDD believes that Israel serves as a useful laboratory for teaching the next generation of U.S. national security leaders' best practices in national security, public diplomacy, and counterterrorism. Participants will do a deep dive into the complex issues that a democracy confronts in the face of ongoing national security threats to the homeland. It is part of FDD's strategic mission to provide educational opportunities for the next generation of U.S. national security leaders and communicators.

The trip experience will help Zaina and Anna Claire better understand the region and advise their Representative/Committee on current events in Israel and national security challenges in the region. FDD invited and selected Zaina and Anna Claire for this trip. The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies had no role in selecting the trip participants.

Zaina Adamu, Deputy Director of Communications, House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party

- The following is an example of a relevant press release from the Committee:
<https://democrats-selectcommitteeontheccp.house.gov/media/press-releases/krishnamoorthi-courtney-press-state-and-cia-chinas-continued-transfers-rocket>
 - The trip will include briefings on Iran's destabilizing influence in the region, as well as its capabilities and close relationship with China and Russia. The CCP Committee has actively investigated how China enables Iran's rearmament, including the transfer of chemical precursors used to produce solid-fuel ballistic missiles, shipments that continued even after Iran's conflict with Israel in June 2025. A firsthand understanding of conditions on the ground in Israel could help Zaina better support the Committee's communications on these intersecting threats.

Anna Claire Stietenroth, Legislative Director, Congressman Brian Jack (R-GA)

- The following is an example of relevant legislation cosponsored by Congressman Jack: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/7622>
 - The trip will include briefings on Iran's destabilizing activities in the region, the ongoing threat posed by its proxy networks, and the broader U.S.-Israel relationship. Congressman Jack has cosponsored the Iran Human Rights, Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act of 2026 and the United States-Israel FUTURES Act of 2026, reflecting his engagement on both Iran policy and U.S. support for Israel. A firsthand understanding of the issues facing Israel could help Anna Claire better advise the Congressman on related legislation and policy.

Q 12: For each sponsor required to submit a sponsor form, describe the sponsor's interest in the subject matter of the trip and its role in organizing and/or conducting the trip:

Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies is a private foundation which strives for a future in which the U.S. and Israel live up to their highest ideals. Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies has previously contributed to organizations that sponsor a range of educational activities designed to educate Americans about the importance of the U.S.-Israel relationship. The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies has provided funds to provide financial support for the trip but has not had a direct role in the organizing, planning, or conducting of the trip. The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies had no role in selecting trip participants. The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies has further informed FDD that it will conduct a review of the grant after the conclusion of the trip to ensure that the funds are spent in accordance with the terms of its grant.

FDD believes that Israel serves as a useful laboratory for teaching the next generation of U.S. national security leaders some of the best practices in national security and counterterrorism. FDD recruited, selected, invited, and confirmed the trip participants and has been and is responsible for planning, facilitating, organizing, and conducting the trip.

Q 18: Total Expenses for Each Participant

Other Expenses:

Activities and entrance fees (Yad Vashem, Kalia, CT Exercise, Druze Gardens, Western Wall, Kfar Aza)	\$537.94
Insurance	\$90
Refreshments during sessions and snacks on the bus	\$156.18
Parking/road tolls	\$22.00
Total	\$806.12



FDD's August 2026 NSFP Trip to Israel
August 12-21, 2026

Please do not circulate

Guides: Iftah Burman, Enia Krivine

Wednesday, August 12

Time	Activity
04:00	Group arrives at Reagan National Airport (DCA)
06:02-07:25	Group Flight on DL 5802 from Reagan National (DCA) to John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)
07:25-10:30	Group layover at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)
10:30	Group flight on El Al 0004 from John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) to Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV)

Thursday, August 13

Time	Activity
03:05-04:30	Arrive at Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV), go through customs, and retrieve luggage
04:30-06:00	Travel by bus to the Inbal Hotel in Jerusalem
06:00-12:00	Check-in to Inbal Hotel and prep for lunch and afternoon activities
12:00-12:30	Walk to independent lunch at Mamilla
12:30-13:30	Independent lunch at Mamilla
13:30-14:00	Travel by bus to the Ancient City of David
14:00-15:30	Survey of national security during early Jewish civilization at the City of David One of the most intractable issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been the question of the future of Jerusalem. Jerusalem's City of David, more than any other site, represents the complexity of this conflict. The City of David came into existence in the days of Abraham as a fortified and impressive Canaanite city, around the famous Gihon spring of ancient Jerusalem. Most archeologists agree this to be the ancient city of Jerusalem that later became

	the capital of the united Israelite tribes under King David. To Jewish Israelis, the site represents the beginning of their physical and emotional attachment to Jerusalem that has continued over three thousand years. The site is also located in a predominantly Arab neighborhood of Silwan. Exploring the City of David and examining its surroundings brings the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to light and helps participants understand the deep ties to Jerusalem and the geopolitical implications of those ties.
15:30-16:00	Walk to the Western Wall Heritage Foundation
16:00-17:30	VIP tour of the Western Wall Tunnels Beneath the streets of Jerusalem's Old City, the Western Wall Tunnels expose the full length of the last remaining retaining wall of the Second Temple, destroyed by Rome in 70 AD. For Israelis and the Jewish diaspora, the site represents an unbroken connection to Jerusalem that underpins Israel's founding narrative. The tunnels run directly beneath the Muslim Quarter, meters from the Temple Mount, making the archaeology here among the most politically charged in the world. During this professionally guided tour, the tunnels will serve as a lens through which to examine the historical narratives, sovereignty disputes, and religious claims that shape Israeli security policy.
17:30-18:00	Travel by bus to Inbal Hotel
18:00-19:00	Prep for dinner
19:00-20:00	Group dinner at the Inbal Hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Friday, August 14

Time	Activity
07:00-09:00	Optional breakfast at the hotel
09:00-10:30	Welcome briefing at the hotel with Amos Harel, military correspondent and defense analyst for Haaretz, and discussion on the ongoing Israel-Hamas war and Israel's strategic posture in the Middle East Amos Harel is an Israeli journalist. As military correspondent and defense analyst for Haaretz, Harel has spent the last 25 years covering Israel's ongoing fight against terrorist organizations, its battle with the Palestinian intifada (uprising), and the conflicts with Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon. His published works include <i>The Seventh War: How we won and why we lost the war with the Palestinians</i> (2004), <i>34 Days: Israel, Hezbollah and the War in Lebanon</i> (2008), and <i>The New Face of the IDF</i> (2013). Prior to his current role, he worked as general night editor for Haaretz for four years. Harel has also been an anchorman for a weekly radio program about defense issues

	broadcasted on IDF Radio from 1999 to 2005. Harel has a bachelor's degree in law studies from Tel-Aviv University (1995) and is fluent in English and in Hebrew. In this briefing, Harel will offer his assessment of the ongoing regional war between Israel and Iranian proxies, including what Israel has achieved and failed to achieve, and the difficult tradeoffs shaping its military and political decision-making. The discussion will broaden to Israel's wider strategic posture in the Middle East, including the implications of the multifront conflict for Israeli deterrence, regional alignments, and the U.S.-Israel relationship.
10:30-11:15	Travel by bus to the Israel Antiquities Authority and 30-minute en route briefing with tour guide Iftah Burman on the IDF's intelligence failures on October 7 Iftah Burman, founder of the Middle East Learning Academy, is a Middle East geopolitics expert, and a veteran tour educator of Israel. Iftah speaks with foreign officials, members of the intelligence community and security forces, academics and students. Additionally, Iftah acts as a director of senior-level national-security missions to Israel, of US government officials, US military officers, and think-tank experts. Iftah also provides geopolitical commentary for English speaking news outlets. Iftah is a PhD candidate in Middle East studies, focusing on Hizballah and Syria at the Bar-Ilan University. Iftah received his BA in Political Science and Middle East Studies, and MA in Contemporary Middle East History. During the drive to the Israel Antiquities Authority, Iftah Burman will brief participants on the intelligence failures that preceded the October 7 attacks, including how Hamas built and concealed its operational capacity for the assault despite Israel's sophisticated intelligence apparatus. The briefing will cover the systemic breakdowns in collection, analysis, and warning that allowed the attack to succeed, and the reforms Israel has undertaken in response.
11:15-12:30	Guided tour of the "Rising from the Ashes" exhibit at the Israel Antiquities Authority This new exhibition, opened at the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein National Campus for the Archaeology of Israel in Jerusalem, presents the extraordinary involvement of the Israel Antiquities Authority at the scene of a modern-day disaster — this time, not to uncover relics of the distant past, but to assist in the search for missing persons in charred homes and sites in the communities of the Gaza Envelop after the attacks of October 7. Through unprecedented documentation of the events of that horrific day, the exhibition invites visitors on a journey etched in memory and heart: from shock and loss, through painful reflection, to a glimmer of hope for renewal rising from the destruction. Retrieved from https://www.iaa.org.il/en
12:30-13:00	Travel by bus to Machane Yehuda Market

13:00-14:30	Independent lunch at Machane Yehuda Market
14:30-15:00	Travel by bus to the hotel
15:00-16:00	Briefing at the hotel on the attacks of October 7 and current operations in Gaza with Amir Tibon Amir Tibon is a senior writer for Haaretz. He joined Haaretz in 2017 and has been the newspaper's Washington correspondent, a senior editor for its English edition, and diplomatic correspondent. He is the author of two books, "The Last Palestinian" which came out in 2017 and is the first English biography of Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas, and "The Gates of Gaza" which came out in 2024 and details his own family's survival of the October 7 attack, combined with a history of Israel's relations with the Gaza Strip. In this briefing, Amir will share his firsthand account of October 7, when Hamas terrorists infiltrated Nir Oz, the kibbutz where he and his family lived. He will also offer his assessment of how the war has unfolded since, and how border communities are grappling with the prospect of return.
16:00-18:00	Prep for dinner
18:00-18:30	Travel by bus to dinner
18:30-20:30	Traditional Shabbat dinner at a family home and discussion on normalization with Lebanon with Jonathan Spyer, director of research at The Middle East Forum Jonathan Spyer oversees the Forum's content and is editor of the <i>Middle East Quarterly</i>. Mr. Spyer, a journalist, reports for <i>Janes Intelligence Review</i>, writes a column for the <i>Jerusalem Post</i>, and is a contributor to the <i>Wall Street Journal</i> and <i>The Australian</i>. He frequently reports from Syria and Iraq. He has a B.A. from the London School of Economics, an M.A. from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics. He is the author of two books: <i>The Transforming Fire: The Rise of the Israel-Islamist Conflict</i> (2010) and <i>Days of the Fall: A Reporter's Journey in the Syria and Iraq Wars</i> (2017). Participants will join a traditional Shabbat dinner hosted at a private family home in Israel, where Jonathan will lead a discussion on the prospects and obstacles for Israeli-Lebanese normalization, drawing on his firsthand reporting from the region.
20:30-21:00	Travel by bus to hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Saturday, August 15

Time	Activity
07:00-08:00	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:00-08:15	Travel by bus to Haas Promenade Overlook
08:15-09:00	Strategic Depth Overview of Jerusalem with Iftah Burman at Jerusalem Overlook Jerusalem is of immense strategic importance for the State of Israel's national security posture. At this briefing, participants will receive an overview of Israel's topography, border threats, and security imperatives with respect to the greater Jerusalem envelope.
09:00-09:30	Travel by bus to the Old City of Jerusalem
09:30-11:45	Explore the diversity and security installations of the Old City of Jerusalem with Iftah Burman The Old City of Jerusalem is home to the holiest shrines of the three monotheistic religions, including the Temple Mount, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Holy Basin is the historic location of Jerusalem and refers to the land surrounding the Old City, including the Mount of Olives, believed to be the departure point for Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem and the cemetery where Jews have been burying their dead for 2,500 years. The Holy Basin also includes the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest site, and the Temple Mount, sacred ground for Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Control over these sensitive areas remains among the largest disputes in the Middle East. The professionally guided survey will walk through these sites and others, educating trip participants about their historical impact and their role in today's political discussions.
11:45-12:30	Independent lunch in the Old City of Jerusalem
12:30-13:30	Travel by bus to Qaser El-Yehud , traditional site of Jesus' Baptism
13:30-14:00	Briefing from Iftah Burman on Israeli-Jordanian military cooperation at Qaser El Yahud, traditional site of Jesus' Baptism According to Christian tradition, Qaser El-Yahud is the site where John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan. It is one of the holiest sites in the Christian world. The site includes monasteries, churches, and lands belonging to eight different Christian denominations. The site sits along the Jordan river, which serves as the border between Israel and Jordan. The border is so narrow, that while standing on the Israeli side of the site, one can speak with Jordanian soldiers on the Jordanian side. Iftah Burman will brief participants on Israeli-Jordanian military cooperation and border security while visiting this site.
14:00-14:30	Travel by bus to Kalia Beach
14:30-16:00	Briefing from Iftah Burman on water and border security dynamics along the Jordan Valley at Kalia Beach , at the Dead Sea

	For decades, Israel has been developing the agricultural potential of the desert. While the Middle East is suffering from water shortages, Israel, through modern technology and water conservation policies, including the recycling of over 80 percent of water used for domestic purposes and transferring it to agriculture, has “made the desert bloom.” The key regional players also face serious environmental issues in the Dead Sea region. One of the major environmental concerns is the receding of the Dead Sea and the appearance of sinkholes, which cause the earth above to collapse. Participants will receive a briefing on these issues, which has led to unprecedented cooperation between Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians and serves as a model for regional cooperation.
16:00-17:00	Travel by bus to the hotel
17:00-18:00	Prep for dinner
18:00-18:30	Travel by bus to dinner at the American Colony Hotel
18:30-19:00	Pre-dinner briefing on the Palestine Liberation Army, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Hamas with Iftah Burman and Enia Krivine Enia Krivine is the senior director of FDD’s Israel Program and National Security Network. She joined FDD after nearly seven years at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), where she helped strengthen the U.S.-Israel relationship through education and advocacy. Prior to AIPAC, Enia worked on several political campaigns and served as director of congressional affairs for the Israel Allies Foundation. She began her career in DC over a decade ago as a Middle East fellow at the House Foreign Affairs Committee, serving under Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. Enia holds an M.A. in Middle Eastern studies from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a B.A. in broadcast journalism from Arizona State University. She is an FDD National Security Fellowship Program alumna. Iftah’s bio can be found on a previous page. Enia and Iftah will discuss various Palestinian factions/entities and their histories, policies, and current political standing. This will provide helpful background to participants before the evening discussions.
19:00-20:00	Dinner briefing on Palestinian statehood with Samer Sinijlawi, Palestinian security consultant at the American Colony Hotel Samer Sinijlawi is a political activist and a Palestinian political commentator from East Jerusalem. He is a Fatah opponent to the Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas and he is chairman of the Jerusalem Development Fund. Sinijlawi will brief participants on the prospect of Palestinian Statehood amid broader regional tensions and a shifting geopolitical landscape.
20:00-20:15	Short break
20:15-21:00	Dessert briefing on the Israeli Arab community with Khaled Abu Toameh , journalist and Middle East expert at the American Colony Hotel

	Khaled Abu Toameh is an awarding-winning journalist and TV producer who covers Palestinian affairs for The Jerusalem Post. He previously worked as a senior producer for NBC in the Middle East and has reported on events in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for several media outlets. Khaled will brief participants on Israel's Arab population, reporting and the media in Israel, and other topics of interest.
21:00-21:30	Travel by bus to hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Sunday, August 16

Time	Activity
07:00-08:15	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:15-08:30	Check out of the Inbal Hotel
08:30-09:30	Briefing with Canadian-Israeli journalist, Matti Friedman, on the current war in Israel and an overview of regional security dynamics Matti Friedman is the author of five works of nonfiction that have been translated into more than a dozen languages. His newest book is <i>Out of the Sky: Heroism and Rebirth in Nazi Europe</i> (March 2026). Matti's work as a reporter has taken him from Israel to Lebanon, Morocco, Moscow, the Caucasus, and Washington, DC. A former Associated Press correspondent, his work has appeared in the <i>New York Times</i>, <i>Smithsonian Magazine</i>, the <i>Atlantic</i>, and elsewhere. He currently writes from Israel for <i>The Free Press</i>. Matti was born in Toronto and lives in Jerusalem with his family. Friedman will draw on his experience as a foreign correspondent to examine how the current conflict is being reported and why understanding Israel's security requires zooming out beyond Gaza and the West Bank to the broader Middle East. He will also discuss his assessment of what that wider lens reveals about the stakes of the current war.
09:30-10:00	Travel by bus to Yad Vashem
10:00-11:30	VIP tour at Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial Museum To understand how Israelis view national security, one must understand the trauma of the Holocaust. Israelis view threats to Israel's destruction in light of the events of the 1930s and 1940s when the German Reich's threats to exterminate the Jewish people were not taken seriously by the international community. By visiting the museum, participants will better understand how Israelis interpret the threat of an Iranian nuclear program and Iran's commitment to Israel's destruction. Yad Vashem has become a symbol of the Jewish people and its transformation from total helplessness to self-reliance

	and strength. A visit to Yad Vashem provides historical context for the Jewish state. A professional docent from the museum will guide the participants through the museum's main exhibit and the children's memorial.
11:30-12:30	Independent lunch at Yad Vashem
12:30-13:15	Travel by bus to U.S. Embassy Jerusalem
13:15-13:30	Security check at U.S. Embassy Jerusalem
13:30-14:30	Briefing with the Honorable Mike Huckabee, U.S. Ambassador to Israel on the U.S.-Israel relationship In November 2024, President-elect Trump nominated former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee to be U.S. Ambassador to Israel. He was elected Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas in 1993. When his predecessor resigned, Huckabee became Governor of Arkansas from July 1996 until 2007, gaining national recognition for his successes as governor. Huckabee ran for president in 2008, coming in second for the Republican nomination to former Senator John McCain. Huckabee hosted a daily radio show called <i>The Huckabee Report</i> and the number one rated weekend show on the Fox News Channel for 6 1/2 years. He ran for president in 2016, losing the Republican nomination to President Donald Trump. Starting in 2017, Huckabee hosted a weekend show on TBN called <i>Huckabee</i>, which ended after his nomination in 2025. Before his career in public office, Huckabee had a career in Christian broadcasting and advertising and served as a pastor for 12 years. Participants will receive a briefing from U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee on the state of the U.S.-Israel relationship, as well as the threats posed to U.S. interests by Iran (and the broader Russia-China-Iran axis). Ambassador Huckabee will address key areas of focus including American policy toward Gaza's post-conflict governance, the status of nuclear negotiations with Iran, and ongoing efforts to advance regional normalization.
14:30-15:30	Travel by bus to Har Adar Settlement
15:30-16:30	Briefing on Israeli settlements and security concerns at Har Adar with Oded Revivi Revivi will offer a ground-level perspective on the security challenges facing Israeli communities in the West Bank, drawing on his experience as both a local official and a leading voice in the international sphere. The discussion will address how October 7 and the subsequent war have reshaped the security environment in the West Bank, the relationship between settlement policy and Israel's broader strategic depth, and the diplomatic pressures bearing on the future of the region.
16:30-18:30	Travel by bus to Sheraton Hotel
18:30-19:00	Check into hotel and prep for dinner
19:00-19:30	Drive to dinner

19:30-21:00	Dinner with Israeli national security startup professionals in Tel Aviv This dinner briefing will feature representatives from multiple firms within Israel's defense startup ecosystem, from traditional aerospace to cyber, robotics, and AI. Each representative will discuss how their company supports various national security initiatives (domestically and abroad).
21:00-21:30	Drive back to hotel
Overnight	Sheraton Hotel HaYarkon St 115, Tel Aviv-Yafo, 63573, Israel +972 3-521-1111

Monday, August 17

Time	Activity
07:00-08:00	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:00-10:30	Travel to Kerem Shalom and 1-hour briefing from Iftah Burman on IDF liaison units and cooperation with Israel's neighbors During the drive to Kerem Shalom, tour guide Iftah Burman will brief participants on the IDF's liaison units, the largely quiet infrastructure through which Israel's military maintains working relationships with neighboring states. These units have played a critical role in coordinating humanitarian aid, managing border crossings, and sustaining back-channel communication with Jordan, Egypt, and Palestinian counterparts throughout the current war.
10:30-11:15	Briefing from IDF representative on border crossing operations into Gaza and aid diversion from Hamas at Kerem Shalom Crossing Kerem Shalom Crossing is the primary crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The Crossing is managed and operated by the Crossings Administration at the Ministry of Defense and is intended to allow the passage of goods between Israel and the Strip. The Crossing is situated next to Kibbutz Kerem Shalom, in the tri-border area between Israel, Egypt, and the Gaza Strip. In recent years, following the closure of the Karni Crossing, the Kerem Shalom Crossing has become the sole passageway for goods. The Crossing is situated next to the town of Kerem Shalom, about 4 km west of Rafiah in the Strip. <i>Retrieved from https://www.gov.il/en/departments/general/shalom</i> Participants will receive a briefing from an IDF representative at Kerem Shalom on border crossing operations and the persistent challenge of aid diversion by Hamas, including Israeli efforts to monitor, secure, and maintain humanitarian access while preventing exploitation of aid flows by designated terrorist organizations.
11:15-11:45	Travel by bus to Nova Music Festival Memorial in Reim

11:45-12:45	Battleground walkthrough of the Nova Music Festival Memorial in Reim with former IDF Lt. Col. Amir Goren Lt. Col. (Ret.) Amir Goren, veteran and security expert, offers 42 years of military insights. CEO of GSA Security Group and founder of the International Institute for Migration and Security Research, Goren's lectures blend personal stories with practical lessons, equipping audiences to face modern challenges. Goren's years in the military were spent on the IDF's High Level Negotiation Team, where he specialized in combat roles and counterterrorism. He has instructed at the IDF School of Counterterrorism. Lt. Col. Goren commanded a battalion that fought at the Nova Music Festival site on October 7—he will walk participants through his operational experiences that day and share both tactical and personal takeaways from the most difficult day in Israel's history.
12:45-13:15	Travel by bus to lunch
13:15-14:00	Group lunch at Kibbutz Kfar Aza
14:00-15:30	Briefing at Kibbutz Kfar-Aza with Shachar Shnurman on Israeli resiliency and life near the border with Gaza Shachar Shnurman was born in Kibbutz Shuval, located in the southern periphery of Israel. During his military service in the IDF, he served as a sniper and became an expert marksman. Over the past 20 years, he has held various logistics positions within different Kibbutz industries. He moved to Kibbutz Kfar Aza 20 years ago, and in 2015, founded the Kfar Aza Whiskey Club, which holds bi-monthly meetings. Tragically, on October 7, 2023, the club lost two of its members who were brutally killed. Two months after the attack, Shachar and his wife were the first to return to their home in the kibbutz. To foster unity and provide comfort to the community, they began hosting weekly BBQs for residents, soldiers, and volunteers. This initiative quickly became the main gathering place in the kibbutz. Participants will visit Kibbutz Kfar Aza, one of the communities most devastated by the October 7 attacks, for a briefing on Israeli resiliency and the experience of life along the Gaza border. The briefing will draw on the kibbutz's own story of destruction and rebuilding as a lens into the broader resilience of Israeli border communities in the face of persistent threat.
15:30-16:00	Travel by bus to The Four Memorial at Givat Kobi
16:00-17:00	Geographical briefing on Hamas' October 7 attacks at Givat Kobi lookout with IDF Lt. Col. (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi Lieutenant Colonel (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi is an IDF battalion commander, venture capitalist, and lecturer. Erez served in IDF Paratrooper Brigade 646 as a battalion commander during the "Iron Swords" War, leading full-scale ground operations across Gaza, Lebanon, and Judea & Samaria. He commanded some of the war's most daring and complex assaults through

	Urban terrain. In civilian life, he is the CEO of Epic Endeavor Venture Capital and a lead lecturer in Business Strategy at Tel-Aviv University. Participants will receive a geographical briefing on Hamas' October 7 attacks from IDF Lt. Col. (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi at Givat Kobi, an elevated lookout point overlooking the communities and terrain targeted that morning. Lt. Col. Yerushalmi will walk participants through the attack routes, the scale of the assault, and the tactical and strategic context of the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust.
17:00-19:15	Travel by bus to Tel Aviv and en-route 45-minute group debrief facilitated by Enia Krivine We will use this opportunity to discuss the speakers and topics we have been exposed to throughout the trip. We have found giving our participants the opportunity to reflect on the topics and perspectives presented to them as a group helps in their ability to understand Israel's complex realities.
19:15-	Dinner on own in Tel Aviv
Overnight	Sheraton Hotel HaYarkon St 115, Tel Aviv-Yafo, 63573, Israel +972 3-521-1111

Tuesday, August 18

Time	Activity
07:00-08:30	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:30-09:00	Check out of Sheraton Hotel
09:00-09:30	Travel by bus to the Kiryat and en-route briefing on the IDF's organizational structure En route to the Kiryat, participants will receive a 30-minute briefing from tour guide Iftah on the IDF's organizational structure and the role of Israel's military headquarters in coordinating operations across commands. The briefing will provide context for the meeting ahead with Maj. Gen. Goldfuss and orient participants to how the IDF's northern front fits within the broader command architecture.
09:30-10:30	Briefing at the Kiryat with IDF Maj. Gen. Dan Goldfuss, commander of the IDF Northern Corps and the Multi-Domain Joint Maneuver Array Participants will receive a briefing at the Kiryat, Israel's military headquarters in Tel Aviv, from IDF Maj. Gen. Dan Goldfuss. Maj. Gen. Goldfuss will address Israeli military operations and force posture along the northern front, including the evolving threat environment in Lebanon and Syria and the IDF's approach to multi-domain warfare.
10:30-11:30	Walk to briefing at Azrieli Sarona Tower meeting room
11:30-12:30	Briefing with BG (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel at Azrieli Sarona Tower

	Brig. General (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel is currently a fellow at the International Institute for Counterterrorism at Reichman University. From 2007-2012, he was the director of the Counterterrorism Bureau at the Prime Minister's Office, where he implemented cyber, cargo, aviation, border protection, and public security technologies. During the Second Lebanon War, Nuriel served as a deputy division commander of the 91st division. Across his military career, he has held roles as a military attaché at the Embassy of Israel in Washington, D.C., J-3 of Northern Command, deputy director of the Gaza Strip division, and commander of a territorial brigade in the West Bank. He holds a bachelor's degree and master's degree in political science and national security from the University of Tel Aviv and the University of Haifa, respectively. Drawing on his experience coordinating Israeli counterterrorism policy at the highest levels of government, Nuriel will provide a strategic overview of Israel's current threat landscape and the Israeli government's approach to counterterrorism strategy prior to the counterterrorism training exercise.
12:30-13:00	Walk to lunch at Sarona Market
13:00-14:00	Independent lunch at Sarona Market
14:00-15:00	Travel by bus to counterterrorism training exercise
15:00-17:00	Learn best practices in counterterrorism with Parabellum Parabellum offers a unique tactical experience providing an authentic glimpse into the world of special forces within Israel's security system. Designed and led by veterans of elite units and the intelligence community, the activity combines values-driven content with hands-on physical engagement and operational thinking. Participants step into the shoes of Israeli special forces soldiers for an experiential counterterrorism training exercise, discovering Israeli tactics to defend the homeland and gaining a deeper understanding of why the IDF fights, and how its special forces are structured and operate. Guided into a focused "military mode," participants experience teamwork, discipline, and decision-making under pressure, all within a controlled, professional, civilian-adapted environment.
17:00-19:30	Travel by bus to Galei Kinneret hotel
19:30-19:45	Check-in to Galei Kinneret hotel and prep for dinner
19:45-21:15	Group dinner at the hotel and 1.5-hour moderated debrief on the counterterrorism training exercise We will use this opportunity to give our participants the chance to reflect on the counterterrorism training exercise and share what they learned, including observations and possible policy implications.
Overnight	Galei Kinneret Eli'ezer Kaplan Blvd 1, Tiberias, Israel +972 4-670-7070

Wednesday, August 19

Time	Activity
07:00-08:30	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:30-08:45	Travel by bus to Kibbutz Ginosar boat dock
08:45-09:30	Boat ride to Capernaum and briefing with tour guide Iftah Burman on the strategic importance of the Sea of Galilee While sailing on the Sea of Galilee, participants will receive a 45-minute briefing from tour guide Iftah Burman on the strategic importance of the lake to Israel. Serving as roughly a third of Israel's freshwater supply, the Sea of Galilee sits at the center of a broader competition over water resources that has shaped Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Jordanian relations for decades. The Golan Heights, visible from the water, were seized by Israel in 1967 during the six-day war in part to secure this resource and, critically, to eliminate a direct Syrian pathway into Israeli territory via the lake.

09:30-10:30	Guided tour of the ancient city of Capernaum Capernaum has been inhabited, destroyed, rebuilt, and fought over continuously for more than two millennia. The layered ruins tell that story: a first-century synagogue, rebuilt in the fourth century, overlaid by a Byzantine church, abandoned under Ottoman neglect, and excavated and preserved under Israeli sovereignty. During this tour, participants will gain a ground-level view of why the Galilee region has been strategically contested for two millennia, and why it remains strategically important today.
10:30-11:15	Travel by bus to Kibbutz Merom Golan
11:15-13:15	Geopolitical jeep tour and briefing in the Golan Heights on the strategic importance of the Golan Heights and confronting threats from Syria with Capt. (Ret.) Ilan Shulman Captain (Res.) Ilan Shulman, a disabled IDF veteran, divides his time guiding geopolitical tours on the Golan Heights, lecturing to students, giving geopolitical briefings for delegations through various Israeli foreign ministry programs, and fulfilling his IDF reserve duties in the Northern Command's intelligence unit. Shulman was raised in Kibbutz Merom Golan near Israel's border with Syria, where one of his favorite jobs was herding the kibbutz cattle. Shulman served in the IDF's Paratroopers Brigade, rising to the position of company commander. He holds a B.A. in Israel and Middle East Studies. From the high ground of the Golan, Shulman will walk participants through the terrain that has defined Israel's northern defense posture for decades. The briefing will also address the dramatic shifts in Syria following Assad's fall, the new actors now operating along Israel's northern border, and what the post-Assad landscape means for Israeli deterrence and freedom of operation in the Syrian theater.
13:15-13:45	Travel by bus to Gilabun
13:45-14:45	Group lunch at Gilabun
14:45-15:30	Travel by bus to Jordan/Syria Overlook in Eliad
15:30-16:30	Briefing on Israel's current relationships with its Eastern neighbors at Jordan/Syria Overlook with Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus is a senior fellow at FDD focused on the Middle East. He served in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) for 24 years as a combat commander in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. He also served as a military diplomat, foreign relations expert, and international spokesperson. He recently retired as lieutenant colonel. Jonathan was the first Israeli officer to be seconded to the United Nations (UN), during which he provided military and strategic analysis for UN peacekeeping forces. He has directed social media and public diplomacy efforts and has extensive on- and off-camera experience from his years as a spokesperson.

	From this vantage point, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus will brief participants on the status of Israel's relationships with its two eastern neighbors, Jordan and Syria. Conricus will address how Israel is managing both complex relationships simultaneously during wartime, with the Jordan-Israel relationship serving as a fragile but functional partnership, while the Syria-Israel relationship remains an open question with significant implications for regional stability.
16:30-17:30	Travel by bus to the hotel
17:30-18:30	Prep for dinner
18:30-19:00	Travel to dinner at Magdalena Restaurant
19:00-20:30	Dinner and briefing on strategic communications during Israel's multifront war with Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus During dinner, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus, former IDF international spokesman, will brief participants on how Israel has navigated strategic communications across a multi-year, multifront war. With simultaneous operations in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and now direct confrontations with Iran, Israel has faced the challenge of explaining complex, fast-moving military actions to international audiences with competing interests and limited context. Conricus will draw on his firsthand experience managing that information environment to discuss what effective military communications looks like under pressure, where Israel has succeeded and fallen short, and what the implications are for U.S. policy and public support.
20:30-21:00	Travel by bus to hotel
Overnight	Galei Kinneret Eli'ezer Kaplan Blvd 1, Tiberias, Israel +972 4-670-7070

Thursday, August 20

Time	Activity
07:30-08:45	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:45-09:15	Check out of Galei Kinneret Hotel
09:15-10:15	Travel by bus to IDF Northern Command
10:15-11:15	Briefing at IDF Northern Command Participants will receive a briefing at IDF Northern Command headquarters from senior military officers responsible for Israel's northern front. The briefing will address Israeli force posture and operational doctrine along the Lebanon and Syria borders, the evolving threat environment in the post-October 7 period, and the IDF's approach to deterrence and defense in depth against Hezbollah and Iranian-backed forces in the region.
11:15-11:45	Travel to Adir Cafe

11:45-13:45	Lunch at Adir Cafe and 1.5-hour briefing on Lebanon at Adir Winery with Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus Set against the landscape of the western Galilee, within sight of the Lebanese border, participants will receive a lunchtime briefing from Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus on the Lebanon threat. Drawing on his years as the IDF's international spokesman during active operations in the north, Conricus will walk through Hezbollah's military buildup, its integration into Iran's regional axis, and the strategic calculations behind Israel's 2024 campaign in Lebanon. The briefing will assess the current state of the ceasefire, the durability of Israeli deterrence along the northern border, and what the Lebanon case reveals about the future of proxy warfare in the Middle East.
13:45-15:30	Travel to Dalyat El-Carmel and 30-minute briefing on Israel's minority communities En route to Dalyat El-Carmel, Iftah will give participants an overview of Israel's minority communities, including Arab citizens, Druze, Bedouin, and Circassian, and their distinct relationships with the Israeli state. The briefing will cover legal status, military service, political representation, and the fault lines that have sharpened since October 7, providing context for the community visit ahead.
15:30-16:30	Briefing over coffee with a Druze Community Leader at Dalyat El-Carmel Over coffee in one of Israel's largest Druze villages, participants will hear directly from a community leader about Druze identity, the tradition of military service in the IDF, and what October 7 and the subsequent northern campaign have meant for a community that straddles the Israel-Lebanon border in ways few others do.
16:30-17:30	Travel by bus to dinner at Hellena Restaurant
17:30-18:15	Group debrief and feedback at Hellena Restaurant We will use this opportunity to discuss the speakers and topics we have been exposed to throughout the trip. We will also give the participants an opportunity to provide feedback to FDD staff on their trip experience.
18:15-19:30	Closing dinner and briefing on the future of Israel's national security and its relationship with the West with Eyal Hulata Eyal Hulata is a senior international fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) and was the first foreign visiting fellow at FDD headquarters. From July 2021 to January 2023, Eyal served as Israel's national security advisor and head of Israel's National Security Council (NSC). Eyal served under Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Prime Minister Yair Lapid. During his tenure, Eyal coordinated the national effort on Iran, coordinated the maritime border agreement with Lebanon, and co-headed the Strategic Consultation Group with his American counterpart, Jake Sullivan. Between February 2021 and July 2021, Eyal served as the chief product officer of the Israeli fintech company PAGAYA and entered the field of Climate Tech. Earlier

	in his career, Eyal served for more than 20 years in Israeli national security roles. For his achievements, Eyal was awarded the prestigious Israeli Defense Award. Eyal is a graduate of the Israel Defense Forces elite technology leadership program “Talpiot,” with a B.S. in physics from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He also holds a PhD in physics from Tel Aviv University and an M.A. in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School. Over dinner, Eyal Hulata will brief participants on Israel's national security outlook and its evolving relationship with the West. Hulata will address how Israel is recalibrating its strategic priorities in the aftermath of October 7, navigating the tension between its security requirements and the expectations of its Western partners, and positioning itself for a regional order that looks increasingly different from the one that existed before the war.
20:15-20:45	Travel by bus to Ben Gurion Airport

Friday, August 21

Time	Activity
00:30	Depart Israel on El Al Flight LY0027
05:15	Arrive to Newark Liberty International Airport on El Al Flight LY0027
08:15-09:46	Group flight on UA 3501 from Newark Airport (EWR) to Reagan National (DCA)

Post-Travel Disclosure Form Addendum: FDD's August 2026 National Security Trip to Israel

Differences from the Trip Sponsor form submitted for Committee approval are reflected below:

Question 5:

- **Transportation Costs:** The actual per-person transportation cost was higher than initially estimated on the Trip Sponsor form. This was primarily due to an increase in bus costs, as we required extra hours on the bus due to a few changes in the schedule. Additionally, the VIP escort service at the airport was slightly more expensive than anticipated, and the Jeep tour in the north was slightly less expensive than initially anticipated.
- **Hotel Costs:** The lodging costs were slightly lower than anticipated as the Inbal Hotel only charged 50% of the room rate for early check-in on August 13, rather than the full rate that we expected.
- **Meal Costs:** The actual meal costs were slightly lower than anticipated for several of the dinners. We have included the updated total cost in the form.
- **Other Expenses:** Below please find an updated list of other expenses. The entrance fees at Kalia beach, the Western Wall tunnels, Druze Gardens, Kfar Aza, and Capernaum were slightly lower than anticipated. The insurance fee was higher as we switched providers and purchased a more comprehensive policy. We also did not spend as much on snacks as anticipated.

Other Expenses:

Identify Specific Nature of "Other" Expenses (e.g., taxi, parking, registration fee, etc.)

Activities and Entrance fees (Yad Vashem, Kalia, CT Exercise, Druze Gardens, Western Wall, Kfar Aza): \$527.73

Insurance: \$188

Refreshments during sessions & Snacks on the bus: \$115.46

Parking/Road tolls: \$22.00

Total: \$853.19



FDD's August 2026 National Security Trip to Israel
August 12-21, 2026

Guides: Iftah Burman and Enia Krivine

Wednesday, August 12

Time	Activity
04:00	Group meets at Reagan National Airport (DCA)
06:02-07:25	Group flight from Reagan National (DCA) to John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) on Flight DL5802
07:25-10:30	Layover at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)
10:30	Group flight from John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) to Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV) on Flight LY 0004

Thursday, August 13

Time	Activity
03:50-05:00	Group arrives at Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV), goes through customs, and retrieves luggage
05:00-06:00	Travel by bus to the Inbal Hotel in Jerusalem
06:00-12:00	Check-in to the hotel and prep for lunch and afternoon activities
12:00-12:30	Walk to independent lunch at The First Station
12:30-13:30	Independent lunch at The First Station
13:30-14:00	Travel by bus to the City of David
14:00-15:30	Survey of national security during early Jewish civilization at the City of David One of the most intractable issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been the question of the future of Jerusalem. Jerusalem's City of David, more than any other site, represents the complexity of this conflict. The City of David came into existence in the days of Abraham as a fortified and impressive Canaanite city, around the famous Gihon spring of ancient Jerusalem. Most archeologists agree this to be the ancient city of

	Jerusalem that later became the capital of the united Israelite tribes under King David. To Jewish Israelis, the site represents the beginning of their physical and emotional attachment to Jerusalem that has continued over three thousand years. The site is also located in a predominantly Arab neighborhood of Silwan. Exploring the City of David and examining its surroundings brings the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to light and helps participants understand the deep ties to Jerusalem and the geopolitical implications of those ties.
15:30-16:00	Walk to the Western Wall Heritage Foundation
16:00-17:00	VIP tour of the Western Wall Tunnels Beneath the streets of Jerusalem's Old City, the Western Wall Tunnels expose the full length of the last remaining retaining wall of the Second Temple, destroyed by Rome in 70 AD. For Israelis and the Jewish diaspora, the site represents an unbroken connection to Jerusalem that underpins Israel's founding narrative. The tunnels run directly beneath the Muslim Quarter, meters from the Temple Mount, making the archaeology here among the most politically charged in the world. During this professionally guided tour, the tunnels served as a lens through which to examine the historical narratives, sovereignty disputes, and religious claims that shape Israeli security policy.
17:00-17:30	Travel by bus to the Inbal Hotel
17:30-18:30	Prepare for dinner
18:30-20:00	Group dinner at the Inbal Hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Friday, August 14

Time	Activity
07:00-09:00	Optional breakfast at the hotel
09:00-10:30	Opening briefing on Israel's multifront war with Amos Harel, Israeli journalist for <i>Haaretz</i> Amos Harel is an Israeli journalist. As military correspondent and defense analyst for Haaretz, Harel has spent the last 25 years covering Israel's ongoing fight against terrorist organizations, its battle with the Palestinian intifada (uprising), and the conflicts with Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon. His published works include <i>The Seventh War: How we won</i>

	<i>and why we lost the war with the Palestinians</i> (2004), <i>34 Days: Israel, Hezbollah and the War in Lebanon</i> (2008), and <i>The New Face of the IDF</i> (2013). Prior to his current role, he worked as general night editor for Haaretz for four years. Harel has also been an anchorman for a weekly radio program about defense issues broadcasted on IDF Radio from 1999 to 2005. Harel has a bachelor's degree in law studies from Tel-Aviv University (1995) and is fluent in English and in Hebrew. In this briefing, Harel offered his assessment of the ongoing regional war between Israel and Iranian proxies, including what Israel has achieved and failed to achieve, and the difficult tradeoffs shaping its military and political decision-making.
10:30-11:00	Travel by bus to the Museum of Tolerance and 30-minute en route briefing with tour guide Iftah Burman on the IDF's intelligence failures on October 7 Iftah Burman, founder of the Middle East Learning Academy, is a Middle East geopolitics expert, and a veteran tour educator of Israel. Iftah speaks with foreign officials, members of the intelligence community and security forces, academics and students. Additionally, Iftah acts as a director of senior-level national-security missions to Israel, of US government officials, US military officers, and think-tank experts. Iftah also provides geopolitical commentary for English speaking news outlets. Iftah is a PhD candidate in Middle East studies, focusing on Hizballah and Syria at the Bar-Ilan University. Iftah received his BA in Political Science and Middle East Studies, and MA in Contemporary Middle East History. During the drive, Iftah Burman briefed participants on the intelligence failures that preceded the October 7 attacks, including how Hamas built and concealed its operational capacity for the assault despite Israel's sophisticated intelligence apparatus. The briefing covered the systemic breakdowns in collection, analysis, and warning that allowed the attack to succeed, and the reforms Israel has undertaken in response.
11:00-12:00	Guided tour of "06:29: From Darkness to Light" exhibit at the Museum of Tolerance <i>06:29: From Darkness to Light</i> exhibition takes visitors on an in-depth journey into the events of October 7th and the profound impact they continue to have on Israeli society. Retrieved from https://motj.org.il/en/exhibition/0629-from-darkness-to-light/
12:00-12:30	Travel by bus to Machane Yehuda Market
12:30-14:00	Independent lunch at Machane Yehuda Market

14:00-14:30	Travel by bus to the Inbal Hotel
14:30-15:30	Briefing with Haviv Rettig Gur on the attacks of 10/7 and the impact on Israeli National Security Strategy Haviv Rettig Gur is senior analyst at The Times of Israel and Middle East analyst at <i>The Free Press</i>, and one of the most closely followed English-language voices on Israeli politics, society, and foreign policy. Born in Jerusalem in 1981 and educated at Hebrew University, he began his career at <i>The Jerusalem Post</i> before serving as director of communications for the Jewish Agency for Israel. He has reported from more than twenty countries and lectured widely on Zionism, Israeli society, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this briefing, Haviv discussed how the attacks of 10/7 reshaped Israel's national security strategy and explored the breakdown of prewar deterrence, the strategic and social consequences of a multi-front conflict, and how Israel is rethinking its approach to Gaza, the wider region, and its key alliances in the aftermath.
15:30-18:00	Prep for dinner
18:00-18:30	Travel by bus to dinner
18:30-20:30	Traditional Shabbat dinner at a family home and conversation with Jonathan Hessen on the Turkish threat. Jonathan Hessen is a senior advisor at FDD. Previously, he was a non-resident senior fellow in the Center for Peace and Security in the Middle East at Hudson Institute. He specializes in geostrategy and security issues related to the Middle East and Europe. Participants joined a traditional Shabbat dinner hosted at a private family home in Israel, where Jonathan led a discussion on Turkish hostilities to Israel and partners in the region. He explored Ankara's shifting strategic ambitions, its ties to Israel's adversaries, and the implications of an increasingly assertive Turkey for Israeli national security and the broader Middle East.
20:30-21:00	Travel by bus to hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Saturday, August 15

Time	Activity
07:00-08:00	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:00-08:15	Travel by bus to Haas Promenade
08:15-09:00	Strategic Depth Overview of Jerusalem with Iftah Burman at Jerusalem Overlook Jerusalem is of immense strategic importance for the State of Israel's national security posture. At this briefing, participants received an overview of Israel's topography, border threats, and security imperatives with respect to the greater Jerusalem envelope.
09:00-09:10	Photo at Jerusalem Overlook
09:10-09:30	Travel by bus to the Old City of Jerusalem
09:30-11:45	Explore the diversity and security installations of the Old City of Jerusalem with Iftah Burman The Old City of Jerusalem is home to the holiest shrines of the three monotheistic religions, including the Temple Mount, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Holy Basin is the historic location of Jerusalem and refers to the land surrounding the Old City, including the Mount of Olives, believed to be the departure point for Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem and the cemetery where Jews have been burying their dead for 2,500 years. The Holy Basin also includes the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest site, and the Temple Mount, sacred ground for Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Control over these sensitive areas remains among the largest disputes in the Middle East. The professionally guided survey walked participants through these sites and others, educating them about their historical impact and their role in today's political discussions.
11:45-12:30	Independent lunch in the Old City of Jerusalem
12:30-13:30	Travel by bus to Qaser El-Yehud , traditional site of Jesus' Baptism
13:30-14:00	Explore Israeli-Jordanian military cooperation at Qaser El-Yahud, traditional site of Jesus' Baptism According to Christian tradition, Qaser El-Yahud is the site where John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan. It is one of the holiest sites in the Christian world. The site includes monasteries, churches, and lands belonging to eight different Christian denominations. The site sits along the Jordan river, which serves as the border between Israel and Jordan. The border is so narrow, that while standing on the Israeli side of the site, one can speak with Jordanian soldiers on the Jordanian side.

	Participants learned about Israeli-Jordanian military cooperation and border security while visiting this site.
14:00-14:30	Travel by bus to Kalia Beach
14:30-16:00	Explore water and border security dynamics along the Jordan Valley at Kalia Beach, at the Dead Sea For decades, Israel has been developing the agricultural potential of the desert. While the Middle East is suffering from water shortages, Israel, through modern technology and water conservation policies, including the recycling of over 80 percent of water used for domestic purposes and transferring it to agriculture, has “made the desert bloom.” The key regional players also face serious environmental issues in the Dead Sea region. One of the major environmental concerns is the receding of the Dead Sea and the appearance of sinkholes, which cause the earth above to collapse. Participants received a briefing on these issues, which have led to unprecedented cooperation between Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians and serve as a model for regional cooperation.
16:00-17:00	Travel by bus to the hotel
17:00-18:00	Prep for dinner
18:00-18:30	Travel by bus to dinner at the American Colony Hotel
18:30-19:00	Briefing on the Palestine Liberation Army, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Hamas with Iftah Burman Iftah Burman discussed various Palestinian factions/entities and their histories, policies, and current political standing providing helpful background to participants before the evening’s discussions.
19:00-20:00	Dinner briefing on Palestinian statehood with Rami Nazzal, Palestinian-American Journalist and Activist at the American Colony Hotel Rami Nafez Nazzal is a Palestinian-American and the son of Drs. Nafez and Laila Nazzal. As a child, he traveled extensively with his parents while they taught at world-renowned universities, developing an early insight into the cultures of the world. He attended the Anglican International School in West Jerusalem before earning a degree in Business Management and Tourism from the University of Utah in 2003. After seven years in Boston, he returned to Jerusalem with a clear goal: to be a force for peace and understanding in one of the most complex regions in the world. A seasoned journalist, Rami has written for outlets including <i>The New York Times</i>, <i>TIME</i>, <i>Reuters</i>, <i>Der Spiegel</i>, and <i>The Mail on Sunday</i>. Nazzal briefed participants on the prospect of Palestinian

	Statehood amid broader regional tensions and a shifting geopolitical landscape.
20:00-20:15	Short break
20:15-21:15	Dessert briefing on the Israeli Arab community with Khaled Abu Toameh, journalist and Middle East expert at the American Colony Hotel Khaled Abu Toameh is an award-winning journalist and TV producer who covers Palestinian affairs for The Jerusalem Post. He previously worked as a senior producer for NBC in the Middle East and has reported on events in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for several media outlets. Khaled briefed participants on Israel's Arab population, reporting and the media in Israel, and other topics of interest.
21:15-21:45	Travel by bus to hotel
Overnight	Inbal Hotel Jabotinsky Street 3, Jerusalem +972 2-675-6666

Sunday, August 16

Time	Activity
07:00-08:15	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:15-08:30	Check out of the Inbal Hotel
08:30-09:30	Briefing with Matti Friedman, Canadian-Israeli journalist, at the Inbal Hotel's Galil Hall on the current war in Israel and Israel through the global lens Matti Friedman is the author of five works of nonfiction that have been translated into more than a dozen languages. His newest book is <i>Out of the Sky: Heroism and Rebirth in Nazi Europe</i> (March 2026). Matti's work as a reporter has taken him from Israel to Lebanon, Morocco, Moscow, the Caucasus, and Washington, DC. A former Associated Press correspondent, his work has appeared in the <i>New York Times</i>, <i>Smithsonian Magazine</i>, the <i>Atlantic</i>, and elsewhere. He currently writes from Israel for <i>The Free Press</i>. Matti was born in Toronto and lives in Jerusalem with his family. Friedman drew on his experience as a foreign correspondent to examine how the current conflict is being reported and why understanding Israel's security requires zooming out beyond Gaza and the West Bank to the broader Middle East. He also discussed his assessment of what that wider lens reveals about the stakes of the current war.

09:30-10:00	Travel by bus to Yad Vashem
10:00-11:30	VIP tour at Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial Museum To understand how Israelis view national security, one must understand the trauma of the Holocaust. Israelis view threats to Israel's destruction in light of the events of the 1930s and 1940s when the German Reich's threats to exterminate the Jewish people were not taken seriously by the international community. By visiting the museum, participants gained an understanding of how Israelis interpret the threat of an Iranian nuclear program and Iran's commitment to Israel's destruction. Yad Vashem has become a symbol of the Jewish people and its transformation from total helplessness to self-reliance and strength. A visit to Yad Vashem provides historical context for the Jewish state. A professional docent from the museum guided the participants through the museum's main exhibit and the children's memorial.
11:30-12:30	Independent lunch at Yad Vashem , Israel's Holocaust Memorial Museum
12:30-13:15	Travel by bus to Har Adar
13:15-14:15	Briefing on Israeli settlements and security concerns at Har Adar with Oded Revivi, former mayor of Efrat settlement Revivi offered a ground-level perspective on the security challenges facing Israeli communities in the West Bank, drawing on his experience as both a local official and a leading voice in the international sphere. The discussion addressed how October 7 and the subsequent war have reshaped the security environment in the West Bank, the relationship between settlement policy and Israel's broader strategic depth, and the diplomatic pressures bearing on the future of the region.
14:15-15:30	Travel by bus to Tel Aviv
15:30-18:00	Check in to Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv Hotel and prep for evening briefings and dinner
18:00-19:00	Briefing with DHS attaché Marc Zimmermann on US-Israel cooperation during times of war Marc Zimmermann is a career law enforcement and security professional with a distinguished record of leading multidisciplinary teams across the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to deter, disrupt, and dismantle transnational criminal and terrorist organizations. He currently serves as the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Regional Attaché in Tel Aviv, Israel, leading HSI operations across 15 countries throughout the Levant and Northeast Africa. Previously, Mr. Zimmermann served as Division Chief for the Eastern Hemisphere at HSI Headquarters, responsible for all HSI operations and personnel across

	Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. In this role he spearheaded engagement with the People's Republic of China which led to the establishment of the HSI-led US/China Transnational Crime Working Group.
19:00-19:30	Travel by bus to dinner and 30-minute en-route briefing with Iftah Burman on Israeli "Startup Nation" Israel is known as the "startup nation" due to their strong embrace of entrepreneurship across multiple sectors. As national security challenges evolve and the war against Hamas continues, this approach poignantly applies to Israel's defense sector and has resulted in more firms developing new strategies and technologies to better protect the nation.
19:30-21:00	Dinner with Israeli national security startup professionals in Tel Aviv This dinner briefing featured representatives from multiple firms within Israel's defense startup ecosystem, from traditional aerospace to cyber, counter-UAS, electronic warfare resilience, LiDAR robotics, and AI. Each representative discussed how their company supports various national security initiatives (domestically and abroad).
21:00-21:30	Drive back to hotel
Overnight	Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv Hotel Address: 115 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv, Israel, 63573 Phone: 972-3-5211111

Monday, August 17

Time	Activity
07:00-08:00	Breakfast at the hotel
08:00-10:30	Travel to Kerem Shalom and 1.5-hour briefing from Iftah Burman on IDF liaison units and cooperation with Israel's neighbors During the drive to Kerem Shalom, tour guide Iftah Burman briefed participants on the IDF's liaison units, the largely quiet infrastructure through which Israel's military maintains working relationships with neighboring states. These units have played a critical role in coordinating humanitarian aid, managing border crossings, and sustaining back-channel communication with Jordan, Egypt, and Palestinian counterparts throughout the current war.
10:30-11:40	Briefing from IDF representative on border crossing operations into Gaza and aid diversion from Hamas at Kerem Shalom Crossing

	Kerem Shalom Crossing is the primary crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The Crossing is managed and operated by the Crossings Administration at the Ministry of Defense and is intended to allow the passage of goods between Israel and the Strip. The Crossing is situated next to Kibbutz Kerem Shalom, in the tri-border area between Israel, Egypt, and the Gaza Strip. In recent years, following the closure of the Karni Crossing, the Kerem Shalom Crossing has become the sole passageway for goods. The Crossing is situated next to the town of Kerem Shalom, about 4 km west of Rafiah in the Strip. <i>Retrieved from https://www.gov.il/en/departments/general/shalom</i> Participants received a briefing from an IDF representative at Kerem Shalom on border crossing operations and the persistent challenge of aid diversion by Hamas, including Israeli efforts to monitor, secure, and maintain humanitarian access while preventing exploitation of aid flows by designated terrorist organizations.
11:40-12:10	Travel by bus to site of the Supernova Music Festival in Re'im The Supernova Music Festival in Re'im was one of Hamas' primary targets in the brutal massacre that took place on October 7 in the Gaza envelope.
12:10-13:05	Battleground walkthrough of the Nova Music Festival Memorial in Re'im with former IDF Lt. Col. Amir Goren Lt. Col. (Ret.) Amir Goren, veteran and security expert, offers 42 years of military insights. CEO of GSA Security Group and founder of the International Institute for Migration and Security Research, Goren's lectures blend personal stories with practical lessons, equipping audiences to face modern challenges. Goren's years in the military were spent on the IDF's High Level Negotiation Team, where he specialized in combat roles and counterterrorism. He has instructed at the IDF School of Counterterrorism. Lt. Col. Goren commanded a battalion that fought at the Nova Music Festival site on October 7—he walked participants through his operational experiences that day and shared both tactical and personal takeaways from the most difficult day in Israel's history.
13:05-13:20	Travel by bus to Kibbutz Kfar Aza
13:20-14:00	Lunch at Kibbutz Kfar Aza
14:00-15:30	Briefing at Kibbutz Kfar Aza with Shachar Shnurman on community resiliency

	Shachar Shnurman was born in Kibbutz Shuval, located in the southern periphery of Israel. During his military service in the IDF, he served as a sniper and became an expert marksman. Over the past 20 years, he has held various logistics positions within different Kibbutz industries. He moved to Kibbutz Kfar Aza 20 years ago, and in 2015, founded the Kfar Aza Whiskey Club, which holds bi-monthly meetings. Tragically, on October 7, 2023, the club lost two of its members who were brutally killed. Two months after the attack, Shachar and his wife were the first to return to their home in the kibbutz. To foster unity and provide comfort to the community, they began hosting weekly BBQs for residents, soldiers, and volunteers. This initiative quickly became the main gathering place in the kibbutz. Participants visited Kibbutz Kfar Aza, one of the communities most devastated by the October 7 attacks, for a briefing on Israeli resiliency and the experience of life along the Gaza border. The briefing drew on the kibbutz's own story of destruction and rebuilding as a lens into the broader resilience of Israeli border communities in the face of persistent threat.
15:30-16:00	Travel by bus to Assaf Siboni Lookout The Assaf Siboni Scenic Lookout is a memorial observation point near Kibbutz Nir Am in southern Israel. Built for IDF soldier Assaf Siboni who died in the 1997 Helicopter Disaster, it features 20 wind chimes representing his years of life and overlooks the Nir Am reservoir and the Gaza Strip.
16:00-17:00	Assaf Siboni Lookout Briefing with Lt. Col. (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi Lieutenant Colonel (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi is an IDF battalion commander, venture capitalist, and lecturer. Erez served in IDF Paratrooper Brigade 646 as a battalion commander during the "Iron Swords" War, leading full-scale ground operations across Gaza, Lebanon, and the West Bank. He commanded some of the war's most daring and complex assaults through Urban terrain. In civilian life, he is the CEO of Epic Endeavor Venture Capital and a lead lecturer in Business Strategy at Tel-Aviv University. Participants received a geographical briefing on Hamas' October 7 attacks from IDF Lt. Col. (Res.) Erez Yerushalmi at Assaf Siboni Lookout, an elevated lookout point overlooking the communities and terrain targeted that morning. Lt. Col. Yerushalmi walked participants through the attack routes, the scale of the assault, and the tactical and strategic context of the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust.

17:00-19:15	Travel by bus to Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv
19:15	Independent dinner and evening in Tel Aviv
Overnight	Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv Hotel Address: 115 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv, Israel, 63573 Phone: 972-3-5211111

Tuesday, August 18

Time	Activity
07:00-08:45	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:45-09:00	Check out of Sheraton Grand Tel Aviv Hotel
09:00-09:30	Travel by bus to the Kiry and en-route briefing on the IDF's organizational structure En route to the Kirya, participants received a 30-minute briefing from tour guide Iftah on the IDF's organizational structure and the role of Israel's military headquarters in coordinating operations across commands. The briefing provided context for the meeting ahead at the Kirya.
09:30-09:45	Security check at the Kiry
09:45-10:45	Briefing at the Kiry with Lt. Col. Jonathan Nevo Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Nevo serves as head of the international strategic division in the planning directorate of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), where he focuses on international strategic planning, defense policy, and military cooperation with foreign partners. Lt. Col. Nevo has held a variety of positions in strategic planning, intelligence and international affairs within the IDF and MOD. He holds a master's degree from Tel Aviv University and regularly contributes to professional military discourse through articles and policy papers on strategy, international security, defense planning, and regional affairs. His publications have appeared in professional military forums, including Ma'arachot, and think tanks, such as the Institute of National Security Studies. At this briefing, Lt. Col. Jonathan Nevo discussed Israel's force posture, national security strategy, and regional alliances.
10:45-11:15	Walk to briefing at Azrieli Sarona Tower meeting room

11:15-12:15	Briefing with BG (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel at Azrieli Sarona Tower on Israeli counterterrorism strategy and a strategic overview of Israel's threat landscape Brig. General (Res.) Nitzan Nuriel is currently a fellow at the International Institute for Counterterrorism at Reichman University. From 2007-2012, he was the director of the Counterterrorism Bureau at the Prime Minister's Office, where he implemented cyber, cargo, aviation, border protection, and public security technologies. During the Second Lebanon War, Nuriel served as a deputy division commander of the 91st division. Across his military career, he has held roles as a military attaché at the Embassy of Israel in Washington, D.C., J-3 of Northern Command, deputy director of the Gaza Strip division, and commander of a territorial brigade in the West Bank. He holds a bachelor's degree and master's degree in political science and national security from the University of Tel Aviv and the University of Haifa, respectively. Drawing on his experience coordinating Israeli counterterrorism policy at the highest levels of government, Nuriel provided a strategic overview of Israel's current threat landscape and the Israeli government's approach to counterterrorism strategy prior to the counterterrorism training exercise.
12:15-13:00	Walk to lunch at Sarona Market
13:00-14:00	Independent lunch at Sarona Market
14:00-16:45	Travel by bus to counterterrorism training
16:45-18:45	Counterterrorism Training Exercise with Parabellum Parabellum offers a unique tactical experience providing an authentic glimpse into the world of special forces within Israel's security system. Designed and led by veterans of elite units and the intelligence community, the activity combines values-driven content with hands-on physical engagement and operational thinking. Participants step into the shoes of Israeli special forces soldiers for an experiential counterterrorism training exercise, discovering Israeli tactics to defend the homeland and gaining a deeper understanding of why the IDF fights, and how its special forces are structured and operate. Guided into a focused "military mode," participants experience teamwork, discipline, and decision-making under pressure, all within a controlled, professional, civilian-adapted environment.
18:45-19:00	Travel by bus to Galei Kinneret Hotel
19:00-19:45	Check into Galei Kinneret Hotel and prep for dinner

19:45-21:15	Group dinner at hotel and moderated debrief on the counterterrorism training exercise The group used this opportunity to give participants the chance to reflect on the counterterrorism training exercise and share what they learned, including observations and possible policy implications.
Overnight	Galei Kinneret Hotel 1 Eliezer Kaplan Street, Tiberias, Israel +972 04-670-7070

Wednesday, August 19

Time	Activity
07:00-08:30	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:30-09:00	Travel by bus to Kibbutz Ginosar boat dock
09:00-10:05	Boat ride briefing on the strategic importance of the Golan and Sea of Galilee While sailing on the Sea of Galilee, participants received a 45-minute briefing from tour guide Iftah Burman on the strategic importance of the lake to Israel. Serving as roughly a third of Israel's freshwater supply, the Sea of Galilee sits at the center of a broader competition over water resources that has shaped Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Jordanian relations for decades. The Golan Heights, visible from the water, were seized by Israel in 1967 during the Six-Day War in part to secure this resource and, critically, to eliminate a direct Syrian pathway into Israeli territory via the lake.
10:05-10:35	Guided tour of the ancient city of Capernaum Capernaum has been inhabited, destroyed, rebuilt, and fought over continuously for more than two millennia. The layered ruins tell that story: a first-century synagogue, rebuilt in the fourth century, overlaid by a Byzantine church, abandoned under Ottoman neglect, and excavated and preserved under Israeli sovereignty. During this tour, participants gained a ground-level view of why the Galilee region has been strategically contested for two millennia, and why it remains strategically important today.
10:35-11:15	Travel by bus to Merom Golan
11:15-13:30	Geopolitical Jeep Tour with Capt. (Res.) Ilan Shulman on Strategic Importance of the Golan Heights and Confronting Threats from Syria.

	Captain (Res.) Ilan Shulman, a disabled IDF veteran, divides his time guiding geopolitical tours on the Golan Heights, lecturing to students, giving geopolitical briefings for delegations through various Israeli foreign ministry programs, and fulfilling his IDF reserve duties in the Northern Command's intelligence unit. Shulman was raised in Kibbutz Merom Golan near Israel's border with Syria, where one of his favorite jobs was herding the kibbutz cattle. Shulman served in the IDF's Paratroopers Brigade, rising to the position of company commander. He holds a B.A. in Israel and Middle East Studies. From the high ground of the Golan, Shulman walked participants through the terrain that has defined Israel's northern defense posture for decades. The briefing also addressed the dramatic shifts in Syria following Assad's fall, the new actors now operating along Israel's northern border, and what the post-Assad landscape means for Israeli deterrence and freedom of operation in the Syrian theater.
13:30-13:50	Travel by bus to Gilabun
13:50-14:45	Group lunch at Gilabun
14:45-15:30	Travel by bus to Jordan/Syria overlook
15:30-16:05	Briefing with Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus at Jordan/Syria overlook Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus is a senior fellow at FDD focused on the Middle East. He served in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) for 24 years as a combat commander in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. He also served as a military diplomat, foreign relations expert, and international spokesperson. He recently retired as lieutenant colonel. Jonathan was the first Israeli officer to be seconded to the United Nations (UN), during which he provided military and strategic analysis for UN peacekeeping forces. He has directed social media and public diplomacy efforts and has extensive on- and off-camera experience from his years as a spokesperson. From this vantage point, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus briefed participants on the status of Israel's relationships with its two eastern neighbors, Jordan and Syria. Conricus addressed how Israel is managing both complex relationships simultaneously during wartime, with the Jordan-Israel relationship serving as a fragile but functional partnership, while the Syria-Israel relationship remains an open question with significant implications for regional stability.
16:05-17:15	Travel by bus to the Galei Kinneret Hotel
17:15-19:00	Prep for dinner

19:00-19:30	Travel by bus to dinner at Magdalena
19:30-21:15	Dinner briefing on strategic communications during Israel's multifront war with Lt. Col (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus During dinner, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus, former IDF international spokesman, briefed participants on how Israel has navigated strategic communications across a multi-year, multifront war. With simultaneous operations in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and now direct confrontations with Iran, Israel has faced the challenge of explaining complex, fast-moving military actions to international audiences with competing interests and limited context. Conricus drew on his firsthand experience managing that information environment to discuss what effective military communications looks like under pressure, where Israel has succeeded and fallen short, and what the implications are for U.S. policy and public support.
21:15-21:30	Travel by bus to the hotel
Overnight	Galei Kinneret Hotel 1 Eliezer Kaplan Street, Tiberias, Israel +972 04-670-7070

Thursday, August 20

Time	Activity
07:30-08:45	Optional breakfast at the hotel
08:45-09:00	Check out of Galei Kinneret Hotel
09:00-10:20	Travel by bus to IDF Regional Brigade 769
10:20-11:00	Briefing at IDF 769th Regional Brigade Participants received a briefing at IDF Regional Brigade 769 headquarters from senior military officers responsible for Israel's northern front. The briefing addressed Israeli force posture and operational doctrine along the Lebanon and Syria borders, the evolving threat environment in the post-October 7 period, and the IDF's approach to deterrence and defense in depth against Hezbollah and Iranian-backed forces in the region.
11:00-11:45	Travel by bus to Adir Cafe
11:45-13:45	Lunch at Adir Café and 90-minute Lebanon briefing with Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus

	Set against the landscape of the western Galilee, within sight of the Lebanese border, participants received a briefing from Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus on the Lebanon threat. Drawing on his years as the IDF's international spokesman during active operations in the north, Conricus walked through Hezbollah's military buildup, its integration into Iran's regional axis, and the strategic calculations behind Israel's 2024 campaign in Lebanon. The briefing assessed the current state of the ceasefire, the durability of Israeli deterrence along the northern border, and what the Lebanon case reveals about the future of proxy warfare in the Middle East.
13:45-15:00	Travel by bus to Dalyat El-Carmel and 30-minute en-route briefing on Israel's minority communities En route to Dalyat El-Carmel, Iftah Burman gave participants an overview of Israel's minority communities, including Arab citizens, Druze, Bedouin, and Circassian, and their distinct relationships with the Israeli state. The briefing covered legal status, military service, political representation, and the fault lines that have sharpened since October 7, providing context for the community visit ahead.
15:00-16:30	Coffee briefing with a Druze community leader at Dalyat El-Carmel Over coffee in one of Israel's largest Druze villages, participants heard directly from a community leader about Druze identity, the tradition of military service in the IDF, and what October 7 and the subsequent northern campaign have meant for a community that straddles the Israel-Lebanon border in ways few others do.
16:30-17:30	Travel by bus to dinner at Hellena Restaurant
17:30-18:15	Group debrief and feedback at Hellena Restaurant We used this opportunity to discuss the speakers and topics we were exposed to throughout the trip. We also gave the participants an opportunity to provide feedback to FDD staff on their trip experience.
18:15-19:30	Closing dinner and briefing on the U.S.-Israel relationship with Eyal Hulata Eyal Hulata is a senior international fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) and was the first foreign visiting fellow at FDD headquarters. From July 2021 to January 2023, Eyal served as Israel's national security advisor and head of Israel's National Security Council (NSC). Eyal served under Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Prime Minister Yair Lapid. During his tenure, Eyal coordinated the national effort on Iran, coordinated the maritime border agreement with

	Lebanon, and co-headed the Strategic Consultation Group with his American counterpart, Jake Sullivan. Between February 2021 and July 2021, Eyal served as the chief product officer of the Israeli fintech company PAGAYA and entered the field of Climate Tech. Earlier in his career, Eyal served for more than 20 years in Israeli national security roles. For his achievements, Eyal was awarded the prestigious Israeli Defense Award. Eyal is a graduate of the Israel Defense Forces elite technology leadership program “Talpiot,” with a B.S. in physics from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He also holds a PhD in physics from Tel Aviv University and an M.A. in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School.
19:30-21:00	Travel by bus to Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV)

Friday, August 21

00:30-05:15	Flight from Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV) to Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) on LY0027
06:00-08:15	Group layover at Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR)
08:15-09:45	Flight from Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) to Reagan National Airport (DCA) on UA 3501.
09:45	Conclusion of trip

Invitee List: Foundation for the Defense of Democracies Israel Trip

Participants

Zaina Adamu currently serves as the deputy director of communications for the U.S. House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. In 2018, she founded Ghana Girl Rising, a nonprofit aimed at improving education access for young women in low-income communities. Before that, she was a journalist at CNN, covering the 2012 and 2016 U.S. presidential elections. Zaina is the first African American and first woman to serve as president of Harvard Alumni for Global Development. She holds a bachelor's degree from Morgan State University and a master's degree from Harvard.

Charlotte Asdal is a cofounder of Asdal Advisory Group, an applied research firm specializing in uncovering how the Chinese Communist Party is operating around the world. Her specialty is interpreting how Communist Party history, ideology, and political dynamics shape the landscape of corporate leverage, market access, and crisis risk for global businesses. She has lived and studied in Beijing and Xi'an and maintains proficiency in Mandarin. Charlotte previously served as a naval officer in the U.S. Navy, operating ships in the North and South Atlantic and the Middle East. She is a graduate of the University of Oxford and the U.S. Naval Academy.

John Bachman is a television host, journalist, and author. He anchors *John Bachman Now* on Newsmax's N2 streaming network, where he covers national security, foreign policy, and American politics. Bachman has spent more than two decades in broadcast journalism and regularly interviews policymakers, military leaders, and influential voices in global affairs. He is the author of *Turning Point: How Reagan Liberated Grenada and Won the Cold War* and a graduate of the University of Georgia, where he studied journalism and political science.

Ryan Berger is the chief operating officer of a strategic advisory firm focused on technology competition and a nonresident fellow at the Atlantic Council's Global China Hub. He served at the U.S. Department of State, the White House National Security Council, and the U.S. Department of Defense in various policy and staff positions at the nexus of technology, economics, defense, and national security — including special assistant to the under secretary of state for economic affairs (2019-2021), chief of staff to the ambassador at large for cyberspace and digital policy (2022-2023), and senior advisor to the deputy national security advisor for cyber and emerging technologies (2024-2025). Before entering public service, Ryan worked for private-sector companies, research institutions, think tanks, and the media. He has a master's degree in international affairs from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree in business administration from Emory University. Ryan is also a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations and an advisory council member of the Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy at Purdue.

Andrew Bossert is a certified public accountant, entrepreneur, and U.S. Air Force Reserve officer whose career bridges aerospace, defense, national security, and private markets. His primary role is managing partner and cofounder of The Saratoga Group, a boutique aerospace and defense advisory firm where he oversees consulting services such as management and strategy consulting, strategic communications, and open-source intelligence for U.S. government agencies and commercial clients. He is also managing partner and cofounder of To Kalon Holding Company, a real estate development firm in Napa Valley, California, and founder of Civil-Military Ventures, a private investment vehicle that backs companies across the defense industrial base working to strengthen supply chain resilience, energy abundance, and military superiority. A major in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, Andrew serves with Space Systems Command's Commercial Space Office, where he was instrumental in standing up the U.S. Space Force's Commercial Augmentation Space Reserve (CASR) program, a top priority of the chief of space operations. He has held contracting and acquisition roles spanning space systems, classified programs, and contingency operations, including a deployment to Kabul, Afghanistan, as chief of contracting for the Special Mission Wing and a tour with U.S. Special Operations Command's GHOST program. His decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, and the Joint Service Achievement Medal with Combat Device. Andrew holds a Master of Science in accounting and a Bachelor of Arts in economics and finance from the University of Dallas and completed both the Saratoga Fellowship at the John Jay Institute and the National Security Fellowship at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

Michael Camal serves as a deputy assistant director at the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ's) International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, where he directs strategic initiatives for the Asia-Pacific, Middle East, and North Africa Operations Unit. In this capacity, he oversees vital international law enforcement projects targeting global threats such as terrorism, cybercrime, corruption, and human smuggling. Prior to joining the DOJ in 2024, Mr. Camal spent seven years at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, where he led training and awareness efforts to combat human trafficking. Recognized for his impactful public service, in 2023, he was named a finalist for the prestigious Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal. Originally from New Jersey, Mr. Camal holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Rhode Island and is currently a Master of Arts candidate in human rights practice at the University of Arizona. In his personal time, Michael is producing a documentary film on a Boston-based labor trafficking case.

Alex Halton is the assistant director for partnerships at The Heritage Foundation. In this role, she manages Heritage sponsorships to drive effective partnerships and advance Heritage priorities while serving the conservative movement. Alex started her career in DC in fundraising and previously served on the Heritage development team. She is a graduate of Grove City College with a degree in entrepreneurship.

Kamden Mulder is a William F. Buckley fellow in political journalism at *National Review*, where she covers education, foreign policy, culture, national security, and general politics. A recent graduate of Hillsdale College, Mulder earned a degree in American studies and journalism and graduated with honors in May 2025. Since joining *National Review*, she has focused on reported, interview-driven, and investigative pieces, covering topics including the progressive ideological capture of schools, U.S.-China relations, border security, and updates on the ongoing war with Iran. Mulder contributes to *National Review's* growing social media presence through daily video content, where she shares commentary on viral videos, breaking news, and growing cultural trends. At *National Review*, she has delved into the ever-present issue of antisemitism and religious liberty, both at home and abroad, through her reporting and video commentary. Mulder's work has also appeared in *Independent Women's* features, *The Federalist*, and *Michigan Enjoyer*, a Michigan-based conservative culture and politics publication.

Sam Paulson is the founder of Quantum Frontier Ventures, an independent advisory firm focused on the global quantum technology landscape. He helps clients understand what is real in quantum today, which developments matter, and how to position for the opportunities, threats, and asymmetries quantum is creating. Previously, Sam spent 15 years in cybersecurity, most recently at CrowdStrike, advising senior leaders on complex strategic and operational challenges. He holds a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

Chris Peters is director of Washington Operations at AeroVironment, where he leads international government relations efforts. A retired U.S. Navy officer, he served for 20 years aboard four warships and completed six deployments across Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. His final military assignment was as chief of Senate congressional affairs for U.S. European Command. Chris holds a B.A. in political science from The George Washington University and an MBA from Boston University. A native of northeastern Massachusetts, he now resides in the Washington, DC, area.

Nicole Rosen is executive vice president at BerlinRosen, where she leads the firm's Jewish affairs practice, advising nonprofits, foundations, and individuals championing the Jewish community. Prior to joining BerlinRosen, she founded one of Washington's top boutique public affairs firms specializing in Jewish affairs. There, she led high-impact communications campaigns, including securing Harvard's recent acknowledgment of Zionism as central to Jewish identity and its commitment to protecting Jews and Zionists under its nondiscrimination policy. For more than a decade, Nicole also led communications for congressional and presidential campaigns and managed corporate communications for a Fortune 50 company.

Anna Claire Stietenroth serves as legislative director for Congressman Brian Jack (R-GA), overseeing the congressman's legislative agenda across a broad range of policy issues and serving as his rules associate. Previously, she served as a legislative assistant to Congressman David

Schweikert (R-AZ) and worked for her hometown congressman, Austin Scott (R-GA), first as a legislative correspondent and later as a legislative assistant. A native of Macon, Georgia, Anna Claire earned both her bachelor's degree and her Master of Business Administration from the University of Georgia.

Staff Bios:

Enia Krivine is the senior director of FDD's Israel Program and National Security Network. She joined FDD after nearly seven years at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), where she helped strengthen the U.S.-Israel relationship through education and advocacy. Prior to AIPAC, Enia worked on several political campaigns and served as director of congressional affairs for the Israel Allies Foundation. She began her career in DC over a decade ago as a Middle East fellow at the House Foreign Affairs Committee, serving under Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. Enia holds an M.A. in Middle Eastern studies from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a B.A. in broadcast journalism from Arizona State University. She is an FDD National Security Fellowship Program alumna.

Ellie Bufkin is the director of communications at FDD. Before joining FDD, Ellie worked for three years at *Fox & Friends* on the Fox News Channel, first as a head writer and then as a booking producer. Before working in broadcast television, Ellie worked as a breaking news reporter at the *Washington Examiner*, as an editorial staff writer at Townhall.com, and as a senior contributor at *The Federalist*.

Speakers

09:00	Speaker: Amos Harel Topic: <i>Israel's Multifront War and Strategic Posture in the Middle East</i>
14:30	Speaker: Haviv Rettig Gur Topic: <i>The attacks of 10/7 and the impact on Israeli National Security Strategy</i>
18:30	Speaker: Jonathan Hessen Topic: <i>The Turkish Threat</i>

Saturday, August 15:

19:00	Speaker: Samer Sinijlawi Topic: <i>Palestinian Statehood</i>
20:15	Speaker: Khaled Abu Toameh Topic: <i>The Arab-Israeli community and media coverage of Israel's multifront war</i>

Sunday, August 16:

08:30	Speaker: Matti Friedman Topic: <i>Israel Through the Global Lens</i>
13:15	Speaker: Oded Revivi Topic: <i>Israeli settlements and security concerns in the West Bank</i>

Tuesday, August 18:

11:30	Speaker: Nitzan Nuriel Topic: <i>Israeli counterterrorism strategy and a strategic overview of the threat landscape</i>
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Wednesday, August 19:

11:15	Speaker: Ilan Shulman Topic: <i>Strategic importance of the Golan Heights and confronting threats from Syria</i>
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Thursday, August 20:

18:15	Speaker: Eyal Hulata Topic: The future of Israel and the U.S.-Israel relationship
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