

Meeting with the Israel National Defense College (MABAL) Delegation

Overview: In partnership with the Consulate of Israel to New England, MOITI is hosting a delegation of 12 members from the Israel National Defense College (INDC) – a leading institution that trains, shapes, and empowers senior national security leadership in the State of Israel.

The primary purpose of the discussion is to share perspectives and expertise on the Massachusetts defense sector, the SHIELD initiative, and impacts on national or state security.

Date: Tuesday 2 June 2026
10:30am to 11:30am

Location: McCormack State Office Building
1 Ashburton Place
Conference Room 1
Boston, MA 02108

State Attendees:

1. Jeevan Ramapriya, Executive Director of the Mass. Office of International Trade and Investment
2. Undersecretary Sue Terrey, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
3. Major General Gary W. Keefe, The Adjutant General of the Massachusetts Army National Guard
4. John Wetzel, Director, Strategic Investment and Business Operations at Mass. Technology Collaborative

Delegation Attendees:

5. Benjamin Sharoni, Consul General of Israel to New England
6. Liron Finkelstein, Deputy Consul General of Israel to New England
7. Ted Wof, Director of Communications and Digital Diplomacy at the Consulate of Israel to New England
8. Ms. Noa Cohen, Israel National Defense College
9. Colonel William Alexander Colquhoun, British Army
10. Colonel Tanel Rattiste, Estonian Defense Forces
11. Colonel Or Zvi Vollozinky, Israel Defense Forces
12. Commander Chair Ilan Mizrachi, Israel Police
13. Mr. Amit Shtaubert, Israel Ministry of Finance
14. Mr. Nissim Avraham, Israel Land Authority
15. Colonel Shai Lerman, Israel Defense Forces
16. Mr. Tal Gat, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs
17. Colonel Adi Kamper, Israel Defense Forces
18. Major Gilad Yehuda Ritterband, Israel Defense Forces
19. Professor Yossef Nissim Ben Zrtzi, University of Haifa

Run of Show:

**Please note that the schedule may shift slightly.

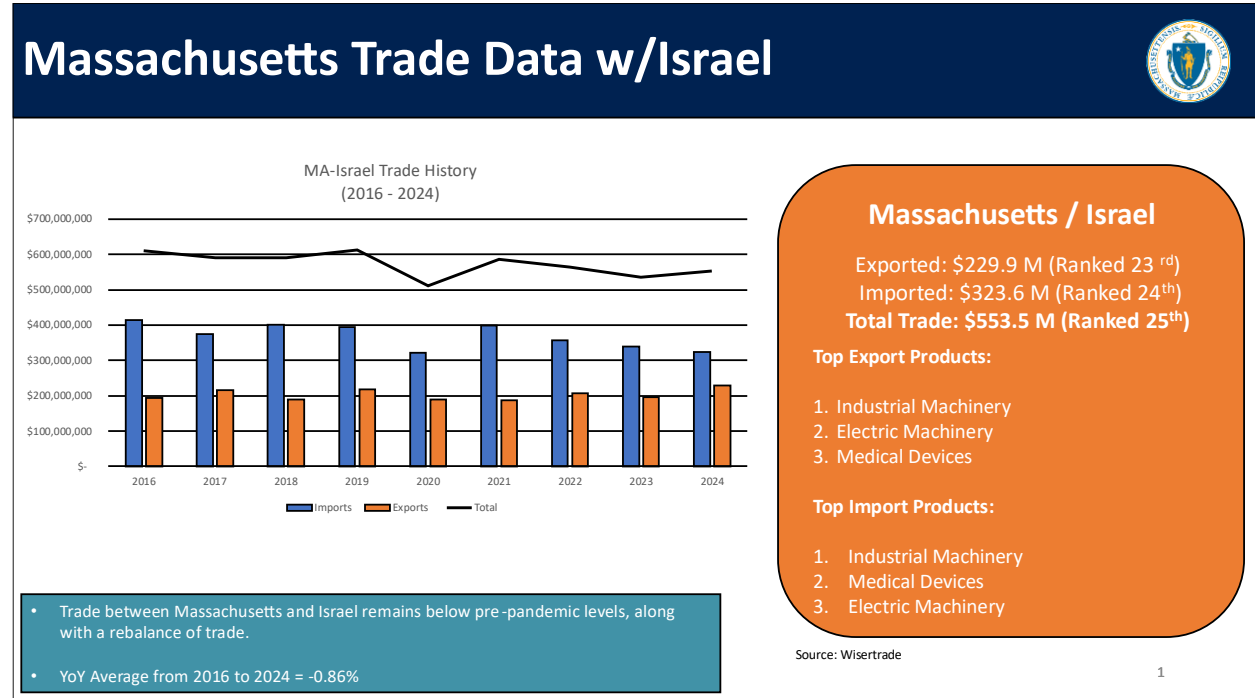
- 10:35 to 10:40 AM — Opening Remarks – Jeevan Ramapriya & Consul General Benny Sharoni
- 10:45 to 10:55 AM — Self Introductions of Team Massachusetts: Undersecretary Sue Terrey, Maj. General Keefe, John Wetzel
- 11:00 to 11:25 AM --- Moderated Discussion
- 11:25 to 11:30 AM --- Closing Remarks and Group Photo

Background:

About the Israel National Defense College (INDC)

- The Israel National Defense College (INDC), also known as the National Security College, is Israel's highest institution for training senior staff in the IDF, the defense establishment, and government ministries.
- The college was initially established in the early 1960s by IDF Chief-of-Staff Haim Laskov and officially reestablished under a government decision in 1976.
- It is a vital stepping stone for high command. Many of its alumni go on to serve in the highest echelons of Israel's military and intelligence command structure, including the IDF Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- Its core mission is to empower senior national security leadership and develop comprehensive national defense doctrines.
- The flagship training program is an intensive 10-month course where students study a mix of military theory, economics, international relations, Middle Eastern affairs, and organizational culture.
- The program is integrated with the University of Haifa, and graduates earn a Master of Arts (M.A.) in Political Science with a specialization in National Security.
- The college hosts a mix of senior military officers (typically Colonels and Brigadier Generals) and high-ranking civilian officials from government agencies (such as the Ministries of Defense and Finance).
- The INDC frequently hosts senior public decision-makers and high-ranking military officers from allied nations, including the United States, Germany, Singapore, and Canada.

Massachusetts-Israel Trade History



- Israel has one of the highest startup densities in the world and strong venture capital activity, while Massachusetts provides access to U.S. markets, research institutions, and investors.

Recent News:

- [Israel Government \(Jan. 20, 2026\) “Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to National Defense College Trainees”](#)
 - Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with National Defense College trainees, including Brigadier Generals in the IDF and senior officials of the security services.
 - The Prime Minister reviewed the key decisions made throughout the War of Redemption that led to changing the face of the entire Middle East and answered their questions.
 - “We are turning Israel into a regional power, and some aspects, a global power. We need a very strong defense, independent production capacity, and to deepen our relative advantage.”
- [Reuters \(September 15, 2025\), “Britain bans Israelis from London defense college over Gaza escalation”](#)
 - Britain has banned Israeli students from attending the Royal College of Defence Studies in London starting next year due to the ongoing military escalation in Gaza.

- The UK Ministry of Defense stated that the decision to pause Israeli participation on UK-run courses was driven by the Israeli government's choice to further expand its military operations in Gaza City.
 - Israel's Ministry of Defense strongly criticized the ban, calling the exclusion a "discriminatory" and "dishonourable act of disloyalty" to an ally at war.
 - This academic restriction follows a separate decision earlier in September 2025, where Britain barred Israeli officials from attending the country's largest arms fair.
- **Reuters (June 16, 2025), “Israel furious as France shuts weapons stands at Paris Airshow”**
 - France shut down the main Israeli weapons stands at the Paris Airshow, including Elbit Systems, Rafael, IAI, and Uvision, after the companies refused to comply with a ban on displaying offensive attack hardware.
 - The French government, led by Prime Minister Francois Bayrou, stated that rules prohibiting offensive weapons had been communicated to exhibitors in advance, citing deep concerns over the conflict in Gaza.
 - The Israeli defense ministry reacted with fury, calling the decision unprecedented and commercially motivated to block competition against French industries, and subsequently filed court petitions against the ban.
 - The diplomatic dispute heavily disrupted the opening day of the world's largest aviation trade fair, which was already subdued following a recent Boeing 787 crash and ongoing tensions in the Middle East.
 - **Boston Herald (Nov. 24, 2025), “Benny Sharoni Op-Ed: Israel, Boston partnership built on innovation”**
 - Benjamin Sharoni, the Consul General of Israel to New England, highlights the strategic partnership between Israel and Boston, noting that both regions are leading innovation hubs with shared strengths in biotechnology, life sciences, cybersecurity, and AI.
 - Israel contributes cutting-edge technological innovation and resourcefulness backed by high R&D investment, while Boston offers world-class human capital, clinical infrastructure, regulatory expertise, and vital market access.
 - A primary example of this collaboration is Sheba Medical Center's decision to launch its first U.S.-based ARC Innovation Accelerator in Massachusetts, serving as a soft landing pad for global healthcare startups to scale digital and AI solutions.
 - Supported by joint efforts like the Israel-U.S. Binational Industrial Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation, the partnership creates local jobs, attracts capital, and drives breakthroughs in science and medicine to solve global healthcare challenges.

- Sheba Tel HaShomer (May 12, 2025), “Sheba Medical Center Expands ARC Innovation to the U.S. with the New Accelerator in Massachusetts”
 - Sheba Medical Center has partnered with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to launch its first U.S.-based ARC Innovation Accelerator in Boston.
 - The accelerator serves as a soft-landing pad for global startups within Sheba's network to develop and scale digital and AI-powered healthcare solutions.
 - The initiative combines Israel's high R&D investment and resourcefulness with Boston's world-class clinical infrastructure, regulatory expertise, and talent pool.
 - Since 2019, the ARC Innovation model has supported over 100 startups, raised more than \$1 billion, and aims to drive economic growth while improving patient outcomes.
- Israeli Startups Flourishing in Boston: Recent Success Stories and Expansion
 - Nearly 300 Israel-related companies operate in Massachusetts, with many choosing Boston as their entry point into the U.S. market.
 - Boston’s universities, venture capital networks, and strong life sciences and technology sectors make it an attractive destination for Israeli startups looking to expand internationally.
 - Collaboration between Israeli entrepreneurs and Boston’s healthcare institutions, investors, and research centers helps accelerate innovation and commercialization.

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