



**F**or the first time this year, ELNET organized a delegation of 15 French MPs from the presidential majority in Israel. **The objective was to show the participants the reality of Israeli democracy, to deconstruct prejudices away from caricatures and anathemas and to promote the Abraham Accords** to newly elected parliamentarians and/or those who have never visited Israel.

Throughout the week, the delegation discovered both the social and political diversity of Israel, whose political landscape was in the process of changing, as well as the security issues facing the country. Our parliamentarians were also able to exchange with startups that are working every day on the ecological transition.

Thanks to the high-level meetings scheduled throughout their stay, the members of the delegation were able to establish a constructive and fruitful dialogue with representatives of civil society, the military and the political world.

**On Tuesday, January 3**, the delegation went directly to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to meet with **H.E. Ambassador Talya Lador-Fresher**, Director of European Affairs and **H.E. Ambassador Joshua Zarka**, Director of Strategic Affairs. The discussions focused on ways to strengthen the bilateral relationship between France and Israel and on the Iranian threat that challenges the world.

During these exchanges, **Ambassador Lador-Fresher** welcomed the excellent relationship that exists between the two countries and the action of the President of the Republic to fight against anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism.

**As for Ambassador Zarka**, his very precise presentation on the Iranian threat allowed our parliamentarians to become fully aware of the risk, when we are already facing a war on Europe's doorstep. **They also identified the threats to the security of the State of Israel from Hamas in the south and Hezbollah in the north, both armed arms of Iran.**



*Meeting with Talya Lador-Fresher & Joshua Zarka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem*



*Briefing by Ambassador Joshua Zarka  
Director of Strategic Affairs at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel*

Later in the evening, the members had dinner with **Pr. Emmanuel Navon**, the new Director General of ELNET Israel, for an overview of the political situation in Israel in the wake of the victory of Benjamin Netanyahu and his right-wing coalition.

Our discussion allowed him to talk about the political history of Israel since its creation, and to highlight the difficulties of the Israeli political system, considered as one of the reasons for the political crisis that the country has been experiencing for the last three years. Pr. Navon also spoke about the personal situation of Benjamin Netanyahu, which, according to him, has a considerable impact on Israeli society and on the political instability of the country. We also discussed the new composition of the Israeli government and the importance of remaining vigilant and attentive to the choice of new ministers.



*Dinner at the King David in Jerusalem in the presence of Professor Emmanuel Navon*

**On Wednesday, January 4**, the delegation went to the Yad Vashem Shoah Memorial for a guided tour and a ceremony in the crypt of remembrance. It was a moving moment for all the deputies for whom the visit to the Memorial was a first. **MNAs Caroline Yadan and Karl Olive** rekindled the flame of remembrance and laid a wreath on behalf of the Renaissance Group and the National Assembly.



At the end of the morning, our parliamentarians headed to the Knesset to meet with **Mr. Yossi Taïeb**, a French-speaking MP from the religious party Shas, and **Mr. Boaz Bismuth**, an MP from the Likud party, who sit in the new majority. They were also able to meet with **Ms. Merav Ben Ari**, MP of the Yesh Atid party, who sits in the opposition.



*Wreath laying in the Crypt of Remembrance of Yad Vashem*



*Official ceremony in the Crypt of Remembrance of the Holocaust Memorial at Yad Vashem*

The discussion with **Yossi Taïeb** focused on concerns about the composition of the new government. A candidate for the chairmanship of the Israel-France friendship group, he said that his Shas party would **focus its efforts on being a buffer between the right** and the nationalist right, acknowledging that the form used by some of the new ministers was not appropriate and that he would not hesitate to oppose these methods.

Asked about his perception of France in the fight against anti-Semitism, he welcomed **the action of the President of the Republic and the Parliament which endorsed in 2019 the operational definition of the IHRA and that it should now be implemented.**

He also welcomed the excellent relationship between the parliamentary friendship groups of the Knesset and the National Assembly, expressing the hope that it will be strengthened during this new legislature.

Regarding the Abraham Accords, MP Taïeb stressed that the objective of the new government is to include as many Arab countries as possible in these agreements, which are a unique opportunity for peace and stability in the region.



*Meeting with Mr. Yossi Taïeb, Member of Parliament Shas party in the Knesset*



*Meeting with Mr. Yossi Taieb, Member of Parliament Shas party in the Knesset*

**The exchange with Merav Ben Ari**, former chairwoman of the Internal Security Committee of the Knesset, focused on her disappointment that women are not sufficiently represented in the new government, and stated that the opposition **will actively participate in the democratic life of the country, especially through the various parliamentary committees.**



*Meeting with Deputy Meirav Ben-Ari of the Yesh Atid Yesh Atid party in the Knesset*

The last discussion took place with **Boaz Bismuth**, journalist and new Likud deputy, who wished to **reassure us about the intentions of the new government, affirming that it would not infringe on fundamental freedoms.**

He expressed his regret that the international media and especially the French media do not cease to dramatize the situation in Israel, the only democracy in the region. He said that the current government is the choice of a sovereign people who wanted a strong, right-wing coalition to lead the policy for the next four years. Asked about the controversy of Minister Ben Gvir's visit to the Temple Mount, **he recalled that he went to the holiest place in Judaism in compliance with the law in force that allows Jews to visit the Temple Mount.**



*Meeting with Mr. Boaz Bismuth, Member of Parliament Likud party in the Knesset*



After this series of meetings, the parliamentary delegation was invited to attend the debates in the Knesset. **The deputies were able to see the liveliness and dynamism of the exchanges between the opposition and the majority and the possibility for all political and religious sensibilities to express themselves**, far from the supposed apartheid that would reign in Israel. Greeted by the president of the session, our delegation experienced a rich and intense moment of democracy.



*Parliamentary delegation of the Renaissance group attends the debates in the Knesset*



Later in the afternoon, the French parliamentarians visited the Old City of Jerusalem to discover the tomb of King David, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Western Wall. **Marked by the social mix of Jerusalem**, they were able to better understand the history of Israel.



*Visit to the Old City of Jerusalem and the Western Wall*



*Visit to the Old City of Jerusalem: Tomb of King David King David, Church of the Holy Sepulchre and Western Wall*



**On Thursday, January 5th**, our delegation left Jerusalem to head to Kerem Shalom and the goods crossing to the Gaza Strip, for a briefing given by the general manager of the checkpoint. This was an opportunity to explain how this crossing works and to present the security measures that are essential to fight against Hamas terrorist activities.

The head of the checkpoint said that **he was at the service of Palestinians and Israelis**, regretting that a large part of the Gazan population is held hostage by a few thousand terrorists. He also explained **to the parliamentarians that 70 of the 200 people working at the checkpoint are Palestinians who live in Gaza and that more than 100 trucks cross the border every day to deliver goods to the Palestinians, proving that there is no shortage in Gaza.**

He stressed **the perfect understanding between Israeli and Palestinian** employees, saying that the working conditions are much better for them on the Israeli side.

To conclude his speech, the director general recalled that the first victims of Hamas are the Palestinian civilians who are taken hostage and live every day with the fear of terrorists.

After his rich presentation, the Director General gave us a tour of the checkpoint and allowed us to witness the verification of goods bound for Gaza. This visit allowed our deputies to better understand the relationship between the Gaza Strip and Israel.



*Security briefing and visit to the Kerem Shalom  
Kerem Shalom cargo crossing*

After leaving Kerem Shalom, the parliamentary delegation visited a military base near Sderot **to see and understand how a battery of the Iron Dome defense system works.** This new technology, the result of close collaboration between the United States and Israel, can identify, detect and destroy missiles fired at Israeli territory.

The IDF lieutenant who welcomed the MPs explained that the cost of firing an Iron Dome missile is around \$100 000. The difficulty of this system lies in the fact that it is manually reloaded and can only fire five missiles per battery. **The risk of Israel coming under fire from Hezbollah and Hamas missiles is a scenario taken very seriously by the army, which is seeking to further improve its defense system to counter this eventuality.**

The lieutenant then led the parliamentarians to an observation point in the Gaza Strip for a security briefing on the Hamas threat. He recalled that **Hamas terrorists do not hesitate to use the population as human shields and to place their missile ramps near schools, hospitals, etc...**



**The objective: to do a maximum of collateral damage to win the war of image.** He also explained how the IDF was taking all the necessary measures to warn the civilian population of the imminence of a strike, at the risk of losing the element of surprise: telephone calls, sound bombs, leaflets.

This situation was taken very seriously by our parliamentarians who understood the importance for Israel to take all necessary measures to ensure its security.



*Visit of a military base and a battery of defense battery Iron Dome*



*Security briefing and update on the situation in Gaza from an observation point near the Gaza Strip*

At the end of the afternoon, our parliamentary delegation arrived in Tel Aviv to meet with PlaneTech startups, in order to discuss issues related to the ecological transition and the new Israeli technologies that are working towards this necessary transformation, particularly those concerning water treatment.



*Discussions with PlaneTech startups on the ecological transition and water treatment*

To conclude this intense day, the parliamentary delegation went, at the invitation of **HE Mr. Eric Danon, Ambassador of France to Israel**, to the Ambassador's residence for a gala dinner in their honor.

On this occasion, the Ambassador gave a precise overview of the relations and prospects for strengthening cooperation between France and Israel. He also returned to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the **crucial role that France played in the historic maritime agreement between Lebanon and Israel on gas deposits**. Finally, to conclude his remarks, he shared his analysis of the **possibility of a conflict between Iran and Israel and the capacity of the Hebrew state to wage a long war**.

On the Israeli-Lebanese agreement, he recalled that the close collaboration between France and the United States was one of the keys to the success of this agreement.

These rich exchanges allowed the parliamentarians to better understand the realities of the region and to grasp the crucial issues for peace and stability in the Middle East.



*Reception at the Residence of HE the Ambassador Eric Danon, Ambassador of France to Israel*



**On Friday, January 6**, the MPs met with **Mr. Itamar Marcus**, founding president of Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) for a presentation of the work conducted by PMW.

Itamar Marcus briefed the delegation on his teams' analysis of the hatred and anti-Semitism present in Palestinian Authority-controlled newspapers, television shows, radio programs, social networks and textbooks in order to understand the messages delivered by the Palestinian leadership to their people.

He also explained **how the Palestinian Authority rewards terrorism by paying salaries to terrorist prisoners, the families of terrorist "martyrs" for a total of several hundred million dollars each year.**

To conclude his presentation, **Itamar Marcus spoke about the Child Abusers campaign that he launched to denounce the abuses against Palestinian children who are conditioned to become martyrs.** This campaign aims to protect children and save the new generations to commit them to the path of peace and coexistence than that of glorifying terrorists.

At the end of the morning, our delegation ended its parliamentary mission with a **visit to the Shimon Peres Peace Innovation Center**, which carries out a dozen peacebuilding and development projects in various fields in conjunction with Arab organizations, mostly Palestinian.

Just before leaving for the airport, our parliamentarians had the chance to taste a falafel to end on a good note.

**The main objective of this mission to Israel was to understand the realities of Israel in order to better understand the challenges of the Middle East.**



*Visit to the Center for Innovation for Peace Shimon Peres*





## PARTICIPATED IN THIS DELEGATION

- **Déborah Abisror**, secretary general of the presidential majority group in the National Assembly
- **Jean-Philippe Ardouin**, MP
- **Mounir Belhamiti**, MP
- **Benoît Bordat**, MP
- **Clara Chassaniol**, substitute MP for Clément Beaune, Minister of Transport
- **Julie Delpech**, MP
- **Claire Guichard**, substitue MP for Gabriel Attal, Minister of the Budget
- **Philippe Guillemard**, substitute MP for Carole Grandjean, Minister of Higher Education
- **Benjamin Haddad**, MP
- **Christophe Marion**, MP
- **Benoît Mournet**, MP
- **Karl Olive**, MP
- **Nicolas Pacquot**, MP
- **Bruno Studer**, MP
- **Caroline Yadan**, substitute MP for Stanislas Guérini, Minister of Public service

## IMPACT & FOLLOW UP

Parliamentarians will continue to engage and advocate for a better understanding of the realities of Israel and the region.

ELNET France continues to maintain a very close relationship with these parliamentarians by distributing content on Israel-related topics

The parliamentarians are committed to strengthening cooperation between France and Israel on their specific issues: security, defense, ecological transition

Following our trip, Caroline Yadan was appointed vice-president of the study group on anti-Semitism at the National Assembly.

Claire Guichard wished to deepen her exchanges with PlaneTech, a startup she met during our delegation

The parliamentarians have undertaken to promote the Abraham Accords within the National Assembly and French institutions.

During the delegation, almost all the parliamentarians present testified to the vivacity of Israeli democracy on their networks.

We have established very good relations with all the participants and maintain regular contact



# MEDIAS

**Caroline Yadan**

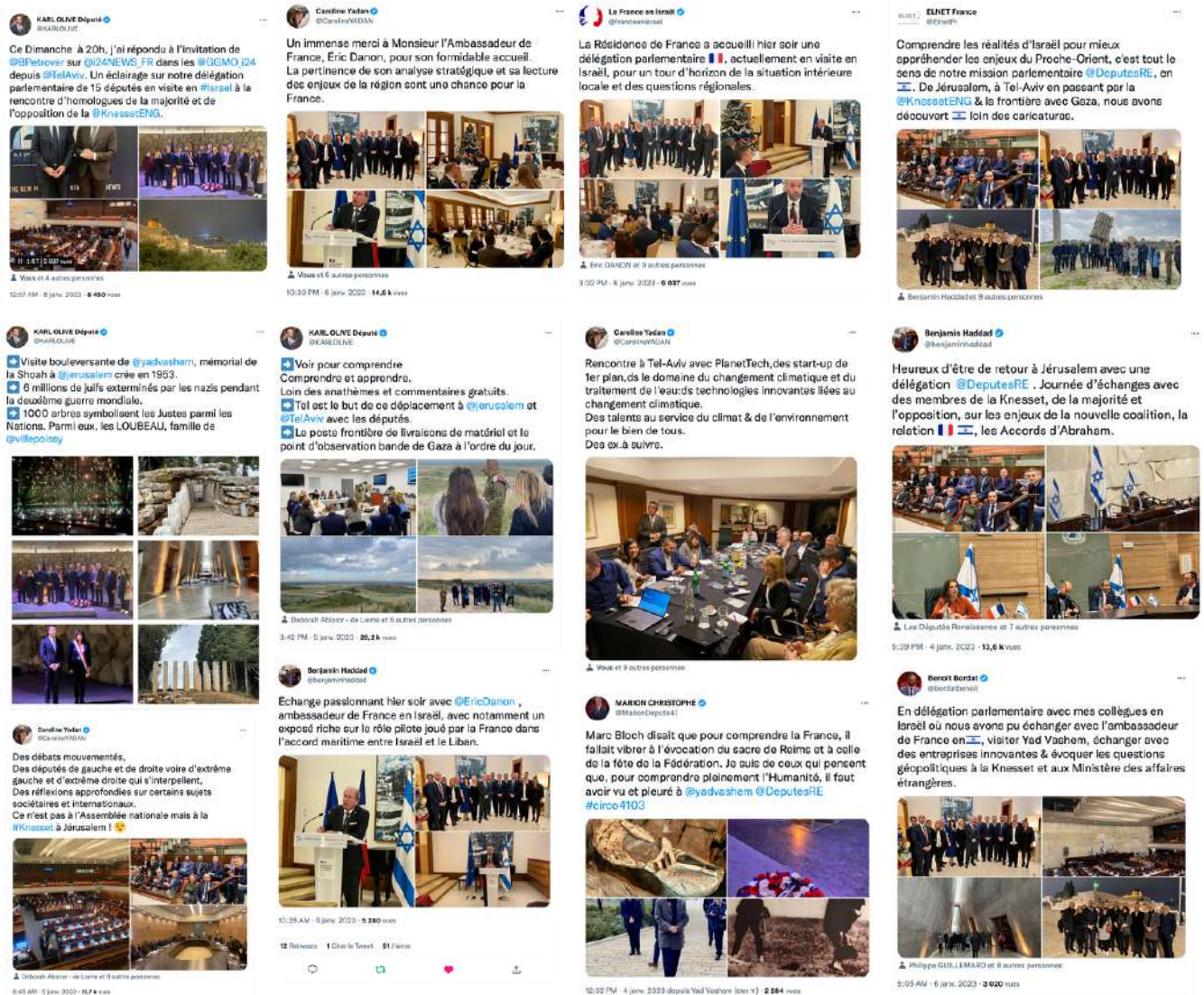
<https://youtu.be/gEI8c4vJQEY>

**Times of Israël**

<https://fr.timesofisrael.com/une-delegation-de-deputes-francais-renaissance-en-visite-en-israel/>

**Jerusalem Post**

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-726856>



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