

Sylvan Adams gives a taste of Israel to the world

• By ALAN ROSENBAUM

Sylvan Adams, Canadian-born Israeli businessman and one of the most active, out-of-the-box philanthropists in the Jewish world today, addressed The Jerusalem Post Annual Conference in a video interview with *Jerusalem Post* editor-in-chief Yaakov Katz.

Adams, whose business card lists his title as “self-appointed ambassador at large for the State of Israel,” explained his involvement in promoting Israel through sporting and cultural events, such as his sponsoring the Israel Start-Up Nation cycling team in this year’s Tour de France, bringing the first stage of the Giro d’Italia grand tour cycling race to Israel in 2018, arranging Madonna’s performance at Israel’s Eurovision in 2019 and participating in the funding of SpaceIL’s journey to the moon in 2019. “The idea behind this is that media coverage of Israel is always universally negative,” says Adams. “The Israel that I moved to four-and-a-half years ago is nothing like what is portrayed in the media, and I’m trying to give a taste of the real Israel to the silent majority that doesn’t really care.”

Adams recounts the positive feelings generated by Israel’s participation in the Tour de France. “We had tens of



‘JERUSALEM POST’ editor-in-chief Yaakov Katz interviews Sylvan Adams. (Lior Lev)

thousands of people yelling our team name, ‘Yisrael Yisrael.’ We felt the love from the French fans.” He notes that tens of thousands of fans who attended the race and a worldwide TV audience of more than 3.5 billion people saw Israel in a positive light.

“The contributions that we make to the world, as sportsmen, as scientists, as musicians, as whatever we do, are a positive force to the world, and I’m

just trying to show Israel as a normal country.” Adams is confident that tourist growth to Israel can increase significantly once COVID-19 ends, due to Israel being the center of three Abrahamic faiths with a beautiful culture and a diverse variety of activities. Adams has numerous programs and plans in the works to continue promoting Israel to the world at large. “I’m just getting started,” he says.

KKL-JNF chairman discusses effects of corona on Israel 2040 plan

• By ALAN ROSENBAUM

Danny Atar, world chairman and CEO of KKL-JNF, addressed The Jerusalem Post Annual Conference in a video interview with Steve Linde, editor-in-chief of *The Jerusalem Report*. Atar described the efforts of KKL-JNF to provide assistance during the coronavirus pandemic, and said that “as an organization that has always stood by the state and the Jewish people, we are standing with the country and trying to help as best we can, by assisting families in distress and helping Holocaust survivors.”

Atar provided an update on “Israel 2040,” the organization’s flagship program that promises to bring 1,000,000 new residents to the Negev and 500,000 new residents to the Galilee, via the creation of hi-tech centers of employment. He explained that, in some ways, the COVID-19 pandemic has held back progress, while in others, it has led to accelerated development. “Our partnership with the Economy



KKL-JNF CHAIRMAN Daniel Atar speaks to Steve Linde. (Lior Lev)

Ministry and Amir Peretz, minister of the economy, in creating joint procedures with the ministry of the economy and KKL-JNF is working at a much faster pace,” he said. KKL-JNF is building partnerships between the business world and the State of Israel to bring young people to live in the Galilee and the Negev.

Atar’s plan to encourage business investment in Israel 2040 from Jews around the world has slowed somewhat because of the pandemic, but he is optimistic that world Jewry will par-

ticipate in the plan and invest in these strategic areas of development. KKL-JNF is encouraging new *olim* (immigrants) to move to the Galilee and the Negev, and Atar declares that the Galilee and the Negev are future economic development engines for the State of Israel.

At the conclusion of the interview, Atar noted the vital role KKL-JNF plays in preserving the environment in Israel by planting trees, developing parks and cycling paths and organizing park trails for the entire family.

WJC President Lauder discusses major issues confronting Jewish people

• By ALAN ROSENBAUM

Addressing The Jerusalem Post Annual Conference from Temple Adas Israel in Long Island, Ronald S. Lauder, president of the World Jewish Congress, discussed the future of the Jewish people and our responsibility to work together to improve the world around us. “In our hands,” said Lauder, “we have the power to make things better for the Jewish people and all people on earth.”

Lauder, who was present at the historic White House signing of the peace accords between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain on September 15, expressed confidence that the normalization of relations between these countries will lead to realignment in the Middle East. “The past, present and future of the Jewish people is tied directly to the future of the State of Israel,” he proclaimed.

Lauder outlined four dangers facing the Jewish people today – a significant increase in antisemitism, division among Jews of different levels of religiosity, division between Jews in the Diaspora and Jews in Israel, and a lack of Jewish education combined with high rates of intermarriage, leading to young Jews abandoning their faith.

Antisemitism has never really vanished, said Lauder, 75 years after the end of World War II, and “no one can be indifferent to antisemitism today.”

Friction among Jews causes unnecessary division, he shared. “We should see ourselves as one people always.”

Lauder emphasized the importance of Jewish education, noting that it is critical to teach young Jews to “know what it means to be Jewish” and to “know the joys of Judaism.” As well, however, the next generation must be taught the facts about what happened in the



RONALD LAUDER
(Noa Grayvesky)

Holocaust, so that it never happens again. He cited a recent survey reporting that six out of 10 American Millennials and Gen Z members did not know that six million Jews were murdered in the Holocaust.

Lauder announced that he is beginning a campaign to save Jewish schools and establish new Jewish schools in the United States, Europe, Latin America and the rest of the Jewish Diaspora. “Nothing is more important for the future of our people than education for all Jewish students,” he said.

‘Political stability is a must in order for Israel’s economy to remain competitive’

Chief economic adviser at Bank Hapoalim analyzes COVID-19 Israeli economy

• By ALAN ROSENBAUM

Addressing The Jerusalem Post Annual Conference, Prof. Leo Leiderman, chief economic adviser of Bank Hapoalim, Israel’s largest commercial bank, analyzed Israel’s economic conditions before the COVID-19, the pandemic’s effect on the economy and the prospects for a full economic recovery.

Israel entered the crisis with favorable economic conditions, said Leiderman, with robust growth, full employment, a low ratio of public sector debt to the gross domestic product and a high private savings rate. Israel was one of the first countries to close its borders and adopt a strict lockdown, which yielded positive results during the crisis’s initial stage.

After policymakers lifted many of the restrictions imposed at the onset of the pandemic, another wave of contagion returned, which has led to the current lockdown. “Pandemics and lockdowns are not good for any economy,” said Leiderman, noting that the world is experiencing the worst recession since the Great Depression of 1929.

While economic forecasts are accompanied by a great degree of uncertainty, Leiderman estimates a fall of at least



PROF. LEO LEIDERMAN
(Lior Lev)

5% in Israel’s GDP this year, followed by positive growth of about 4% next year. He added that Israel’s economic performance is not markedly different from those of the US, Germany and the Netherlands.

When the pandemic struck, said Leiderman, policymakers moved quickly to avoid a major economic and social catastrophe by increasing liquidity, reducing interest rates, increasing government spending to support the health system and providing support to the unemployed.

Leiderman said that Israel’s economy needs political stability, and expressed the importance of approving a government budget for 2021 and a multi-year economic policy plan. “Political stability,” he explained, “is a necessary condition to continue having a vibrant, dynamic ecosystem in Israel.” He added that without political stability, Israel will not be able to take advantage of its full potential and will be less prepared for an economic recovery, if and when the pandemic allows.

He added that Bank Hapoalim is the first banking institution in Israel to sign a memorandum of agreement with Emirates NDB, the largest lender in the United Arab Emirates, and that additional business cooperation agreements will soon follow. He concluded that “our view at Bank Hapoalim is that we need to be modest in our approach to our potential business partners at the UAE. Cooperation and confidence will be built in a gradual way over time.”

MDA’s changing role during the pandemic

• By ALAN ROSENBAUM

Speaking with *Jerusalem Post* news editor Maayan Hoffman at the Jerusalem Post Annual Conference, Dr. Shafir Botner, director of the Magen David Adom paramedic school, who is also overseeing MDA’s efforts to test Israelis for coronavirus, and Prof. Eilat Shinar, head of MDA blood services, explained the changing role of the emergency medical organization during the current pandemic.

Botner explained that Magen David Adom was primarily responsible for conducting corona tests during the first wave. During the current upsurge, responsibility for testing shifted to the Home Front Command and the healthcare providers, but MDA is still conducting the majority of the tests in Israel on behalf of the kupot cholim. MDA is also treating home-based corona patients and transferring patients from corona “hotels” to hospitals, and



DR. SHAFIR BOTNER, director of the MDA paramedic school, and Prof. Eilat Shinar, head of MDA blood services. (Lior Lev)

from hospitals to corona “hotels.”

Shinar, who has worked in plasma research for more than 30 years, explained how using blood plasma containing antibodies from recovered coronavirus patients is being used to treat those who are moderately or severely ill. In some cases, she said, patients

receive the plasma directly, and in others, the plasma is made into an antibody concentrate, which is being used as a clinical trial.

The clinical trial has shown promising results thus far. Preliminary results indicate that patients who receive plasma with high levels of antibodies within the first 72

hours of infection can recover quickly.

Shinar added that Israel’s new National Blood Services Center, which is being built in Ramle, is nearing completion and will include three underground three above-ground floors, in a structure that will be protected from missiles and other threats.

Hava Zingboim receives Israeli innovation award

• By ALAN ROSENBAUM

Hava Zingboim, CEO and founder of Hava Zingboim Cosmetics Ltd, is this year’s recipient of The Jerusalem Post Award for Israeli Innovation and Excellence. Zingboim is one of the pioneers of the “cosmeceutical” industry in Israel and is behind the development of groundbreaking and innovative skin care treatment methods used around the world today.

Known as “the Israeli guru of cosmeceuticals,” Zingboim began her career in the US, studying a unique specialization track in advanced cosmetics at Scott & White Medical Center in Texas. Following her studies, Zingboim opened one of the first clinics in the world for advanced cosmetics in New York. With the vast knowledge she acquired in the field, she decided to bring this novel professional and



HAVA ZINGBOIM
(Lior Lev)

scientific method back to Israel.

Her most groundbreaking invention—PROPHECY and PROPHECY 2—are the first and only creams in the world that use a new technology discovered at Bar-Ilan University, which for the first time allows the use of miniaturized hyaluronic acid that

is able to penetrate the skin without the need for injections.

Zingboim has put Israel on the map in the field of cosmeceuticals, and today partners with industry giants like Estee Lauder, Clinique, Mac and others to share her expertise with a new generation of professionals.