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Cabinet communiqué

19 Sep 2010

The cabinet approved the acquisition of the F-35 stealth plane and the investment of almost NIS 2 billion over the coming decade in developing alternative fuels for transportation.


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 (Communicated by the Cabinet Secretariat)
 Jerusalem

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At the Cabinet meeting today (Monday, 19 September 2010):

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1. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made the following remarks:

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"Last Thursday, 16 September 2010, a ministerial committee chaired by myself, decided - after a series of in-depth discussions - to approve acquisition of the F-35 stealth plane and are thereby bringing the most advanced fighter plane in the world to the IDF. This is a significant step in strengthening the State of Israel's military capabilities. I would like to commend the staff work that was done by the security establishment and the IDF and which led to the integration of [Israeli] systems into the plane. The plane is currently being developed and will be equipped in the coming years. This is one of our answers to the changing threats around us, to maintain our capabilities, along with other actions to improve both our defensive and offensive abilities in the decades to come. We will hold separate discussions on these, but I think that this step, acquiring the most advanced plane in the world, more advanced than any plane in the area, is an important and significant step for the security of Israel.

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Today, we will discuss another item that is important to the security of Israel, to its economic security, and which will, in the long term, also affect our geopolitical status. In the coming decade, the state of Israel will invest almost NIS 2 billion in developing alternative fuels for transportation. I spoke about this at the beginning of my tenure as Prime Minister and I asked [National Economic Council](#) Chairman Prof. Eugene Kandell and the relevant ministers to coordinate and look for a framework in which we might be able to meet the need for alternatives to petroleum - alternative fuels for motor vehicles.

Motor vehicle fuel constitutes a major part of the world's petroleum consumption. Due to the oil markets' changing nature, i.e. the fluctuating price of a barrel of petroleum, until today, no concentrated effort has been made to find alternatives for petroleum. If we start to find and develop such alternatives when the price of petroleum is very high, as soon as prices start to drop, such efforts are halted; therefore, it is difficult to rely on private companies and the usual research bodies to move things forward and fund such research. Thus, there is a need for the governments. But not every government is committed, to the same degree, to finding such a solution.

We are a small country that suffers from the global dependence on petroleum more than any other country. While we may be a small country in certain ways, we are a giant in science, research and brainpower. Therefore, the intention is to concentrate here a focus of work and research, a significant financial focus and harness to it strong forces, in research, science and technology, and link them

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with other similar bodies from around the world, with Israel being the leading factor.

The catalyst for this research activity, which could, in my opinion, produce results within a decade, is the possibility that this effort will lead to results that are so significant for us, and, in my opinion, for humanity as a whole.

I view this as a national goal of the highest importance because the addiction to oil has led to the Western world being dependent on the oil-producing countries and harms the standing and security of the State of Israel. Of course, it significantly harms the environment as well. 40% of emitted greenhouse gases originate in the use of oil; therefore, there are many aspects and advantages here in finding good alternatives for transportation fuel. Today, we are, in effect, launching the first discussion so that we will be able to make practical decisions to advance this important research.

I would like to thank the National Economic Council, its Chairman, Prof. Eugene Kandel, the inter-ministerial team, and the various ministers and their aides. We will need to work together in order to resolve several items. There are still various opinions on how to organize this activity and I intend to solve these problems and advance this project, which is so important for the security and the economy of the State of Israel."

2. Industry, Trade and Labor Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer briefed ministers on his 12-16 September 2010 visit to China, including his meetings with government officials and entrepreneurs, as well as on the series of bilateral trade and research agreements that were signed. The Minister said that China is ready to expand its relations and cooperation with Israel.

Following a brief discussion, Prime Minister Netanyahu instructed that the possibility of holding a meeting between Israeli and Chinese ministers by the end of the year be examined.

3. Pursuant to Article 33a of the [2010 Bank of Israel Law](#), and in accordance with the recommendation of Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz, the Cabinet decided to appoint Mordechai Friedman and Tal Regev as members - on behalf of the public - of the candidate search committee.

4. The Cabinet approved a decision by the relevant ministerial committee on the reduction of prices for plots of land for residential housing in the eastern Lachish region for residents affected by the disengagement plan.

5. The Cabinet began its discussion of a national plan to develop technologies that will reduce the global use of petroleum for transportation and strengthen high-tech industries in the field. GOC Intelligence Maj.-Gen. Amos Yadlin briefed ministers on the global petroleum market's strategic effects on Israel. National Economic Council Chairman Prof. Eugene Kandel briefed ministers on the main points of the national plan, which was formulated by an inter-ministerial team.

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