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JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE BILATERAL PERMANENT WORKING COMMISSION BETWEEN THE HOLY SEE AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL (30 APRIL 2009)

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The Bilateral Permanent Working Commission between the Holy See and the State of Israel has held a Plenary meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel today, Thursday 30 April 2009, for the purpose of advancing the negotiations pursuant to Article 10 § 2 of the *Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel* (30 December 1993).

The Delegation of the Holy See was led by **Monsignor Pietro Parolin**, Under-Secretary for Relations with States at the Secretariat of State, and was composed, in addition, of the following Members:

- H.E. Archbishop Antonio Franco, Apostolic Nuncio in Israel, Chairman of the Commission at the "Working Level";
- H.E. Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, Patriarchal Vicar;
- Msgr. Krzysztof Nitkiewicz, Under-Secretary of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches;
- Msgr. Franco Coppola, Official of the Secretariat of State;
- Father David-Maria A. Jaeger, OFM, Legal Adviser;
- Fr. Jacek Dobromir Jaształ, OFM;
- Mr. Henry Amoroso, Legal Adviser;
- Father Giovanni Caputa, SDB, Secretary.

The Delegation of the State of Israel was led by **Mr. Daniel Ayalon**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and was composed, in addition, of the following Members:

- Mr. Shmuel Ben-Shmuel, Head of World Jewish Affairs and Interreligious Affairs Department, MFA;
- Mr. Oded Brook, Head of the International Affairs Division of the Ministry of Finance;
- Mr. Bahij Mansour, Director of Inter-religious Affairs Department, MFA;
- Mr. Ronen Gil-Or, Adv., Director of General Law Department, MFA;
- Mr. Moshe Golan, State Attorney's Office;
- Mr. Yael Weiner, Ministry of Justice;
- Mr. David Segal, Head of Deputy Foreign Minister's Bureau;
- Ms. Idit Duvdevany, Legal Division, MFA.

The Plenary meeting of the Commission took place in an atmosphere of great friendship and a spirit of cooperation and good will. The Plenary noted that the Working Level Commission achieved significant progress, on the eve of the upcoming important visit of the Pope in Jerusalem.

It was agreed to hold the next Plenary meeting on 10 December 2009, at the Vatican. In the meantime, the working-level Commission will hold meetings in furtherance of both Delegations' pledge to accelerate the talks and conclude the Agreement at the earliest opportunity.

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