



**Shalom, EURAG!**



# Israel seniors



as part of **EURAG** history



# **Present and Future**

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# Prolog part I

If we want to put our finger on a certain factor which characterize the last 100 years I would say in one word - change. if I want to put my finger on a certain factor on the development of humankind since the mid-40<sup>th</sup> of the 20<sup>th</sup> century I would say **mega change**.

Why I related to these two dates? The reason is very simple. Wars with all the horror with all the suffer and destruction, with all the innocent victims, are creating changes and development in many area of life starting technical development, thru medical development, but the second world war brought a radical change it started the era of the Atom. Not only the bomb which a is major change in diplomacy and a real danger to the humanity on this plant and we saw only samples in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the catastrophic melt down of Chernobyl reactor, or Fukuyama, and these days in the Ukraine, but it changed the whole concept of energy in the world.

This was not the only change. The other major one was longevity the span of life has been growing higher and higher and at the same time the birth rate started to decline there were more old people to feed and the manpower was not enough. More and more elderly people had suffered from poverty. So, its true more years to live less quality of life, and it was very difficult for elderly people to adapt them selves and to reinvent themselves so many times in a very short time.



# Prolog part II



The question to be asked is what motivate people like Gisli grandfather or Ben Israel to get up from bed one day and decided to create a wonderful organization like EURAG? Well part of it we have just heard from Gisli, the other part belongs to Ben Israel.

To describe this very special person we must go to the part of our presentation – History! So let me take you to a voyage in time.

To do so we have to point out few dates, do not be afraid I will not test you at the end, well the first one is December 1919. The ship Ruslan anchored in Jaffa harbor on deck 650 pioneers most of them architects, md doctors, actors, advocates and so on. All of them came thru Odessa Ukraine. Ben Israel family the Freezers came on this ship, what I didn't know till lately, that my family was among the passengers as well, what a coincidence?

Not in vain the ship was called the Jewish Mayflower.

Exactly a year later December 20<sup>th</sup> in the Technion building in Haifa The General Federation of Labor was established which is the Histadrut. It was the first ever that an umbrella federation of Trade Unions was established to keep the rights of the Jewish workers and **retirees.**

Why we brought up the the Histadrut ? it simple enough, Ben Israel was part of the Histadrut for a long time of his life.



# Prolog part III

Who was Ben Israel? What was his legacy and vision?

There is a very known song in Israel by the name: "where are there more people like this man?" it fits Ben Israel like a glove to a hand.

He was born in Israel in 1923 and died in 2014. He was 91 years old when he died, and what a full life he had. Ben Israel was the ultimate warrior, when he thought that the situation is worth to fight for, he went all the way to fulfill his mission. He was the perfect dreamer, and he got a vision so clear as a crystal. He was very practical person; he wrote several books most of them about the third age. The most comprehensive book was who is afraid from the third age It was published in 2004 and written by Ben Israel and his wife professor Rut Ben Israel (she was awarded the highest Award of Israel for her special knowledge in labor laws). One of his most famous attributes was priority he always put the interest of the public first then his own, he was offered many jobs, if they put aside the benefit of the society, he simply rejected them. He was enlisted to the Hebrew Brigade in the 2 W.W as an officer. After the war he came back to Israel enlisted to the Hagana, the semi defense force before the State of Israel was established.

Then he continued his military service until he was wounded.

He left for England and studied law in The London School of economics.

In Israel he was elected to the central committee of the histadrut and also as the representative to the ILO the International labor Organization. There he got a very good experience of international relations.

In the 60<sup>th</sup> of the 20<sup>th</sup> century he moved to the south of Israel to Beer Sheba there he was responsible on the activities of the Histadrut and his contribution to its development was something to be proud of because he turned the place to a center of development and industry.

The year 1962 meets him in Beer Sheba.

And in Graz. Where he Gisli's grandfather and other who shared the same vision and dream made EURAG a reality.



**Epilog and future !**

In 1996 Ben Israel was elected as the chairman of the Israeli retirees and pensioners Association. It was the largest elderly people association and representative one, with 120.000 members. He held this post until he died in 18 December 2014

I will never forget this warrior, hard neck, brave man and his massive contribution to young people and old people as well. May he rest in peace.

All the predictions shows that the future is not so bright. The governments have reduced their investments in public services including subsidies in food health and welfare care. The covid 19 damages will continue for long time including in the labor market unemployment and more working from home or elsewhere. The changing of the climate is a devastating factor for food water and habitats. The war in Europe is reducing the energy sources, food sources and more and more spending on arm and defense its going to be harder to feed 10 milliard people in the year 2035, when almost 85 million new people are being add to the population of the world each year.

Is there any thing can be done to minimize the difficulties mentioned before? Yes, if we will take the proper steps. There must be elected, without any delay an emergency expert committee to research and offer solutions. The committee must be limited time to submit its conclusions to the U.N.

Among the recommendation freshwater, substitute origin for energy like wind, solar. Substitute for food supply, more research in the field of sustainability, more possibilities for approachable housing especially equipped and suitable for old people in the community and improvement of private existing flats or houses. These were, but few examples there are more areas to develop and improve and EURAG has a n important role to play in the coming years.





**Thank you so much!**





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