**East Tour Feedback – Russia**

**Inbal**

1. Was the aim of the East tour to gain an understanding of the culture, national security interests and implications for Israel, achieved in the tour?

We have certainly been exposed to Russia's culture and Russia's national security strategy, as well as the implications for Israel. However, of course that in one week of preparation and one week of tour it is not possible to gain a full understanding of the Russian Enigma in depth in these areas.

2. Was the preparatory phase adequately structured towards achieving the tour?

The preparatory stage certainly contributed to building an early understanding of the tour's goals. It was satisfying, but not overloaded.

3. In hindsight do you have any recommendations to revise the preparatory phase by way of topics or speakers or experiences to be added or discarded?

The preparatory stage and the research questions were built around the four echelons familiar to us. Most of the speakers were Israeli professionals engaged (or were engaged) in Russia. Arkady Milman's economic lecture was disappointing in my view. It seems that the Foreign Ministry has more knowledge of the economic ties between Israel and Russia. You can try to bring someone from the department of political research at the ministry. Also, there should be a lecture by someone from the Russian side so that we can get more prepared for how things look on their side, perhaps from the Russian embassy in Israel.

4. Were the pillars of national security adequately exposed during the tour? Did you practically experience the various facets or learned during talks only?

The four echelons were introduced to us. Mostly through lectures rather than through practical work. The side of Russian culture was received from tours in Moscow - the Victory Museum, Kremlin, etc.

5. Was the duration of the tour adequate or do you recommend an increase/ decrease. Suggest events, visits or talks which you would have wished to be included or discarded?

The tour was very enjoyable, well built and taught well. In retrospect, two things were lacking for me - a meeting with political figures (as opposed to professional government officials) and something about what is happening outside of Moscow. It is clear that because of time constraints there was a problem getting further away from Moscow. Perhaps it can be achieved by a documentary film (if one exists) about life far from Moscow or on the territory beyond the Ural Mountains. How, for example, does Russia's border area look like with China, Mongolia, North Korea, etc.?

6. Do you think that the group sizes were adequate or need smaller groups visiting a wider variety of countries?

I think the size of the teams was good. Of course, I would not divide the whole class to more than four destinations.

**Alon**

**Position Paper - East Tour**

Given the fact that we are dealing with the Great Powers, and given the fact that we have devoted only two weeks to dealing with these powers, our methodological aspirations should be modest and defined as a level of "recognition" (the basic, lowest level of understanding, expertise, or control).

1. **Meeting goals** – In general, the tour achieved its purpose, contributed to understanding the Chinese interests and different ways of thinking, and contributed to the knowledge of Chinese culture, which affects, among other things, its conduct in the international arena.
2. **The preparation stage and the BATAM case** - the preparation as a whole was good, but in retrospect it helped us learn the "China we met" rather than "the other China." We focused on the Party and the cities with a slight touch on the Uyghur minority, while more than a billion non-party members, who are not part of the party, do not live in the big cities, and is not Uyghur, received no representation. Could this huge moderate group who received no voice, one day, bring a radical revolution in China? Moreover, we dealt a lot with the triangle of relations between China-US-Israel. However, China's other challenges, such as the emerging markets of Indonesia, Vietnam, India and other countries in the East, have not been addressed, nor have challenges from developed neighbors such as Japan and Korea been addressed. In addition to these two issues, China's "social echelon" and "political echelon" in the regional arena seem to have been inadequately dealt with, and it may be that instead of dividing the tour time between Beijing and Hong Kong, to include a tour in the mainland in order to experience the “other China”.
3. **Duration of the tour** - It will not be serious on our part to pretend to understand and even recognize the Great Powers on the scale of India, China and Russia in a week's preparation time and five days tour. Therefore, the obvious answer to the question, "Is there enough time?", must be negative. At the same time, we must minimize the tour's goals and adjust them for the specified time. A question that can be discussed is whether it is right to hold three tours abroad and "taste everything" (Europe, the East and US), or reduce the number of tours for one or two trips, and add to each section a few days of preparation.
4. **The size of the group** - There is no doubt that the smaller number of people in a group contributes to the whole group's attention. The smaller the group, the better the learning aspect, and a group of up to ten participants is the ultimate group. In the context of the East Tour, this will require splitting from three groups into at least four groups.

For the avoidance of doubt, the comments and recommendations for improvement that have been raised are nullified in relation to the contribution of the tour and the manner in which it was carried out.

Regards,

**Alon Madanes**

**Guy Levi**

1. The goal of understanding the culture was achieved well in relation to the time allotted for the tour and preparation. There is no doubt that a very broad recognition of the very rich Chinese culture takes much more than a week. However, I am impressed that the tour has given the students' a good recognition of the culture .From a relative perspective, China and Israel believe that there is a very deep and balanced understanding of the risks and opportunities that the relations between the two pose to Israel.
2. The preparation stage was well-built and includes a rich and informative lecture that had prepared us well for the tour.
3. As for the preparations, I think it is right to bring in security personnel who could not arrive this year, like Amos Gilad or Efraim Halevi.
4. During the tour, all aspects of national security were touched. The same goes in preparation
5. The tour was well-planned. The coordination and accompanying of the Military Attaché in China was excellent. In the future a closer coordination with the Foreign Ministry in Hong Kong. I recommend leaving the first evening upon arrival free, as to not overdo it.
6. I believe that a division into four groups rather than three will constitute a smaller and more qualitative group.

**Kobi**

**East Tour**

**Question 1**: **The applicability of what we learned in the East tour with regard to Israel**: India today is a regional power and has the potential to become a world-class power that will have a significant impact on the world within a few decades. Therefore, studying the aspects of Indian national security is of great significance to Israel, already in the present, and even more so in the future. During the tour, we reached an understanding of the importance of Israel to a country such as India, both in terms of marketing security and military capabilities provided by the Israeli defense industry, and in the civilian areas in which Israel is a world leader such as water and agriculture, which strengthens the political echelon in Israel's national security. It is very important to understand a different national security culture in many characteristics. These aspects were achieved during the tour**.**

**Questions 2 + 3: Preparation for the tour:** As a rule, the preparation was very good. It would have been more correct to talk about the social echelon in India, which is very important for understanding Indian culture, which has a significant impact on the challenges of Indian national security. A lecture by the participant from India (Raju) was very important for understanding Indian national security, because it was given from an Indian and not an Israeli perspective**.**

**Question 4: The experience with the dimensions of Indian national security:** As mentioned above, it would have been better to strengthen the social echelon in India, which contains much more complexities than Israel. Nevertheless, India succeeds in finding equilibrium between all the complexities of different religions, social statuses, areas of living (periphery, cities) and more. It would have been better to introduce us to Muslims, to villagers, and to lower class people in order to better understand what connects them to the state. It would also be preferable to elaborate on the relations between India and China in the military, political, economic and social aspects, as China poses a major threat to Indian national security. The economic aspect was too narrow and less concerned with India's challenges in the economic echelon of national security, which would have made it possible to better understand the challenges facing India in the coming years. The stock market tour was less effective in order to study the economic echelon**.**

**Question 5: Length of tour and contents:** The tour was too short. The private part at the beginning, the visit to Jaipur, added a lot to the tour and it was good that most of the group experienced it. Visiting the Indian NDC was very important. It would have been right to receive a lecture by an Indian lecturer on Israel and not just by the Israeli ambassador to India.

**Question 6: Group size and assembly:** The group appears to be of the correct size but not in the right mix. Most of it consisted of civilians and internationals. It would be more correct that a large part of the group will also be composed ofIsraeli military personnel.