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For Immediate Release
December 8, 2012

President Shelly in Israel to Meet with Knesset, Agriculture Ministry, & Memorial Visit to Yad Vashem

*The President's Priorities: Agriculture, Technology, Tourism,
Infrastructure, and Government Services*

JERUSALEM, Israel—Arriving today in the ancient city of peace Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and First Lady Mrs. Shelly are in Israel for a week to meet with dignitaries of the Knesset, Israel's legislative body, and the Ministry of Agriculture as the president emphasizes pro-growth strategies for the Navajo Nation.

"We set on this mission to look at how Israel has advanced in growth in some of the same areas we face on the Navajo Nation," said the president as he arrived in Tel Aviv earlier today. "We came to discuss how we can adapt new technology for the Navajo people."

President Shelly will meet with the Christian Allies Caucus of the Israeli Knesset, which includes members from six of 13 political parties in Israel to bridge relations as he relates the need for a healthier agricultural climate. The caucus is chaired by David Rotem, who also serves as chair of the Knesset Committee for Law and Justice.

"Agriculture is a priority for us," said President Shelly, "as we build a healthier Navajo Nation and opportunities for business development." The president will visit Shikma, a 12,000 acre farm land in southern Israel, meet with Meir Yifrach, who leads the vegetable growers union as he learns more about Israel's agro-business and technology of drip irrigation and fertilization known as Fertigation. Also in the president's agenda is a meeting with Yoav Morag, the regional director for Israel's Ministry of Agriculture.

President Shelly is scheduled to lay a wreath at Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, a custom visiting heads of states do during in their visit in honoring Israel.

President Shelly arrived in Israel during the eight-day festival of lights, the national holiday of Hanukkah, which began on Friday, commemorating the re-dedication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

“It is important for us to share who we are as Navajos, and our own struggles as we have endured since the Long Walk,” said the president. “Our trip is also about cultural exchange in this part of the world where the Israeli people co-exist with their neighbors.”

As President Shelly visits Israel, 7,992 square miles, nearly the equivalent of western Navajo, he will tour historic places, the Mount of Olives, the Western Wailing Wall, the City of David, and Jordan Valley.

Pastor Robert Tso from Shiprock and Myron Lizer, who heads Navajo Westerners/True Value stores coordinated the president’s visit to Israel, along side several faith-based organizations which stemmed from the president’s participation in a Navajo-Israel event last December in Farmington attended by some 300 people from around the United States.

Several faith-based groups and non-government organizations contributed to the president’s visit. The groups desire to see advancement for Navajo, and cultural exchanges for both nations.

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