



Contact: Erny Zah
Director of Communications

Cell: (928) 380-0771

navajonationpress@navajo-nsn.gov

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Navajo President Ben Shelly Meets with Deputy Minister at Knesset, and Honors Survivors of Holocaust at Yad Vashem

JERUSALEM, Israel—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with Ayoob Kara, who serves as Israeli Deputy Minister of the Development for the Negev and Galil today as the two government leaders spoke about agricultural development and future opportunities for the Navajo Nation to advance on Israel's technology in agrobusiness.



“I want to work with your people—I know that Israel is self-sufficient, what we need is your expertise, what can we share,” said President Shelly at the Israeli Knesset this afternoon. “What I read of you—you were no different than we are,” he said, “how did you survive while moving forward in technology, greenhouses—I am interested in that and becoming partners.”

President Shelly speaks at a press conference shortly after he laid a wreath honoring the survivors of Israeli families at Yad Veshem memorial in Jerusalem, President Shelly, according to Israeli officials, is the first tribal leader to visit Yad Veshem.

The president and First Lady Martha Shelly were welcomed at the Knesset by the deputy minister. “It’s an honor to meet your people,” said the Israeli deputy minister as he received the president and first lady. “I can bring with me professional people from companies, said Ayoob. “Galilee is different from the south. We have desert lands where we found a solution for everything—how to grow wheat from a new technology with little use of water.”

Following the meeting at the Knesset the president attended a meeting with Josh Reinstein, director for the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus, who committed the political resources of the Knesset caucus to working with the Navajo Nation in securing agriculture, technology, and infrastructure. “We have developed a way to do three to

four yields a year,” said Reinstein, “with our farming. Avocados we grow them bigger and we have four cycles with drip irrigation,” he said describing the yield of Israel’s year around farming.

The president and First Lady Martha Shelly toured northern Israel yesterday while traveling to Haifa to meet with Professor David Faraggi, Rector for Haifa University encountering massive farming fields of grapes, avocados, bananas, citrus fruit, peppers, vegetables, and orchards of pears and apples, all covered by large nets for protection from birds. The water supply is fed through drip irrigation with injection of microscopic fertilizers as farms produce crops year around.

In his meeting with Professor Faraggi, the president spoke on the need for educational advancement for Navajo students in foreign exchange opportunities. The pathway would include opportunities for foreign students to experience Navajo at the Diné College in Tsaile. The opportunities were expanded by Prof. Faraggi to include faculty. Haifa University has an enrollment of 18,000 students, with 800 of them from foreign countries. The university is one of seven research universities in Israel.

“That exchange can be developed,” said the president at Haifa University. “The super highway can be built. Every nationality can bring their culture so we can all understand who we are—to live together as family, to have a little more peace in the world.”

Honoring the families of survivors of the Holocaust of World War II, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly laid a wreath at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem this morning as they toured the memorial with Pastor Robert Tso, wife Rose, and Navajo businessman Myron Lizer.

The president and first lady will visit farm lands in the Negev, the harsh desert area of Israel where farming communities known as Moshav’s are investing technology and development into green houses with minimal water supply in producing agriculture year around. The visit will include visits to three locations and a lunch meeting with the mayor of Beersheba, Israel, an agricultural town in southern Israel.

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