



STATE OF ISRAEL
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

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DEPARTMENT

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Press Release

**Steinitz Announces the Scheduled Visit to Israel of the OECD Secretary-General
in January 2010 Prior to the Completion of the Accession Process**

**The Socio-Economic Cabinet Headed by the Finance Minister
Discussed Today the Process of Israel's Accession to the OECD**

The Socio-Economic Cabinet headed by Finance Minister Dr. Yuval Steinitz discussed today the process of Israel's accession to the OECD and the issue of the hearings at the OCED conducted by the inter-ministerial steering committee, which is chaired by the Senior Deputy Director General and Head of the International Affairs Department Oded Brook.

Finance Minister Steinitz ordered the internal discussions to be sped up prior to accession to the organization, and announced that the Socio-Economic Cabinet will discuss the matter every month. The Minister gave an update on the visit to Israel by OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría in January 2010, before the completion of the accession process, and on his participation in a special meeting of the Socio-Economic Cabinet. The minister informed the members of the Cabinet that he recently held a series of meetings with a considerable number of the finance ministers and leading economic figures of the 30 OECD member countries. To date, he noted, all of them have undertaken to support Israel's accession to the organization, which is expected in the course of 2010.

Since the Finance Minister and the OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría agreed on a target date for Israel's final accession to the organization – in the first half of 2010 – the processes involved and the mutual visits led by government ministers have gathered momentum. In this respect, next week the Governor of the Bank of Israel, the Minister of Education and Finance Ministry representatives are scheduled to appear before an OECD committee.

Prior to his appearance before the OECD next week, Education Minister Gideon Saar presented his proposals at the Cabinet meeting. These proposals include: the start of negotiations with the Teachers Union before completion of the reforms in the educational system; focusing school curricula on native language studies, mathematics and the sciences; and collaboration between higher education



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organizations in preparation for a multi-year plan and increased transparency in higher education, as reflected by the agreement concerning the transfer of data on salaries at the universities to the Finance Ministry.

Minister of Minorities Avishai Braverman reported to the meeting on the hearing regarding minority, social and welfare matters in which he participated a week ago – a hearing that went off successfully.

Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon stated at the meeting that he does not expect any politically-related problems with respect to Israel's accession to the OECD.

The Governor of the Bank of Israel Stanley Fischer praised the cooperation on the matter between the government ministries and the Bank of Israel, and mentioned the successful coordination between them which is being managed by the Supreme Steering Committee.

Participating in the meeting were: Governor of the Bank of Israel Stanley Fischer, Infrastructure Minister Uzi Landau, Minister of Minorities Avishai Braverman, Education Minister Gideon Saar, Science and Technology Minister Dr. Daniel Hershkowitz, Deputy Finance Minister Yitzhak Cohen, Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon, Finance Ministry Director-General Haim Shani, and Justice Ministry Director-General Guy Rotkopf.

The Finance Minister thanked all the participants, and wished the Governor of the Bank of Israel and the Education Minister a successful hearing next week.