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Dear Reader,

The publication of this, the fifth issue of our journal, coincides with the sixtieth anniversary of the creation of the State of Israel, and it is with both pride and pleasure that we acknowledge that fact.

In the present number, we have, as usual, published the texts of lectures delivered by the most recent guests of the Israel Council on Foreign Relations. These include the then foreign minister of Romania, Dr. Adrian Ciorianu, the prime minister of Sri Lanka, Ratnasiri Wikramanayaka, and the thirty-ninth president of the United States, Jimmy Carter.

President Carter was his usual controversial self, annoying to some, frustrating to many, but mightily interesting to all the many Council members, and members of the diplomatic corps, journalists and guests who crowded into the Ambassador's Hall of the King David Hotel to listen to what he had to say. There were some who thought we should not have invited him because of his stinging criticism of Israel and because of his meeting with the leaders of Hamas. We thought differently. The Council will continue to host guests who have something to say, or write, on subjects of interest to us, whether they conform to our thinking or not. This, of course, is especially true of a former president of the United States who played such a prominent role in brokering peace between Egypt and Israel.

As we go to press, Israel and Syria appear to be moving closer to the negotiating table. We hastened, therefore, to prevail upon Dr. Alon Liel, who has played an important role in this process, to share with us his evaluation of current developments. Any progress in the peace process between Israel and its neighbors is of great interest and importance, always. This is true of the Israeli-Palestinian track but no less so of Israeli-Syrian negotiations, which have been moribund ever since the missed opportunity in Shepherdstown in 2000.

We would urge our readers who have yet to do so to subscribe to the journal and avail themselves of the opportunity to advertise in its pages. We are pleased to acknowledge the ongoing support of the World Jewish Congress. The efforts of Mr. Allesandro Benedetti, who is in charge of international relations and fundraising for the ICFR Board of Directors, are especially appreciated.

Dr. David Kimche
Publisher