

# Head of Israel's Brand Team visits South Florida

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STAFF WRITER

Ido Aharoni, the manager for Israeli Foreign Ministry's Brand Management Team, visited South Florida last week to speak on behalf of the Southeast Region of American Friends of Magen David Adom. In nine events, including those in Delray Beach's Delaire Country Club, Boca Raton's St. Andrews Country Club and Aventura's Williams Island, Aharoni shared his leadership and community concept of his organization, gave guests some background information of what branding is, discussed the tough competition between countries in today's global economy and the terrorism

threats to Israel's economy.

"For 60 years we have emphasized the fact that Israel is right and its enemies are wrong," he said. "While it's important to do that, we also need to communicate to the world that Israel is making positive contributions in all facets of life there and that it is highly attractive and fun and feel-good. Very little of that is being communicated to the world right now and the Brand Israel Program is about to change the way Israelis communicate their country to the world."

During a parlor meeting in Williams Island, Aharoni spoke about the threats to Israel's economy. He said that most Americans are unaware that 75 percent of the

total number of the fatalities and casualties in Israel were that of civilians because of a strategic decision made by the Palestinians to destroy the country's economy.

"Terrorism, however painful and difficult to deal with, will never pose a real threat to Israel's existence, but it can destroy Israel economy," he said. "It can significantly damage Israel's very diligent social fabric."

Aharoni also mentioned that Israel's Secret Service and Israeli Defense Forces have monitored more than 35,000 terrorism attempts and that the vast majority of them were shooting incidents, stabbings, abductions and suicide attempts. He

also said that the Israeli public is in a different mindset today and that its economy is doing well because of Palestinian terrorism threats.

"I think this [threats] is one of the reasons why the Israeli economy is doing so well these days because the Israeli public understands that they have to trust each other," he said.

David Schafer, AFMDA's Southeast Region's Palm Beach County director, spoke about the importance of Aharoni speaking about his organization.

"He is volunteering his time to speak on our [AFMDA's] behalf because as an Israeli, he feels indebted to the lifesaving work of Magen David Adom," he said.



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