

International Forum of Parliament Visitor Centers

14 April 2016
Jerusalem, Israel

Joint Declaration

In October 2015, the Visitors Center of the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament) proposed the establishment of a professional forum of visitor centers in parliaments throughout the world.

In order to promote this initiative, on April 13-14, 2016, a Steering Committee convened at the Knesset in Jerusalem, with representatives of visitor centers from six parliaments: the Parliament of the Czech Republic – Chamber of Deputies, the European Parliament, the Knesset of the State of Israel, the National Assembly of Panama, the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal and the United States Capitol.

The Steering Committee decided to accept the proposal and to establish an International Forum of Parliament Visitor Centers for professional staff (hereafter – the Forum). The objective of the Forum is to foster professional cooperation among visitor centers, to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experience and, by doing so, to help create a better and more meaningful experience for visitors.

The Forum may focus on issues such as educational programs, tours, implementation of new technologies, exhibitions, accessibility, social media, and publications.

The Forum is open to all national and supra-national parliaments and legislative bodies that operate a visitor center or have a department tasked with providing services to visitors.

The Steering Committee will coordinate the activities of the Forum, and will be led by a Chairperson.

The Director of the Knesset Visitors Center will serve as the first Chairperson of the Steering Committee, and will be responsible for updating the Steering Committee and all Forum members.

The Forum intends to establish an exchange of information and best practices, such as a shared resource of pedagogic materials for visitor services.

The Forum also intends to hold an annual conference which will be hosted by a different parliament each year. Each annual conference may focus on innovative projects and new developments.

The purpose of this document is to facilitate the launch of the Forum and is not legally binding.