

International Trading Center of Haifa Bay

1. Summary of project goals

A: Regional

1. Constructing and putting in motion a multinational project capable of stabilizing the Middle East region, as well as boosting the global economy;
2. Creating a stable political axis at the center of the Middle East;
3. Providing an efficient and secure international mechanism for exporting Iraqi petroleum, the profits of which can be shared between the citizens of Iraq, Jordan and Israel.
4. Enabling the Kingdom of Jordan to be part of a regional grouping that will benefit from the international cooperation.
5. Providing hundreds of thousands of jobs - for Israelis, Palestinians, Jordanians, and Iraqis;
6. Restoring the Mediterranean Sea to its historic role – a hub of international commerce between the East and Europe, Africa and America.

B: National

1. Creation of an Israeli national development project that will be locally designed and implemented, while financed by international investment;
2. Transferring part of Israel's economic activities from the Dan Region to the country's north, accelerating the expansion of the northern region and of lower and upper Galilee;
3. Advancing Israel's transportation system by connecting the country's north (and south) with its center and overcoming the economic weakness of its peripheral areas;
4. Restoring the Land of Israel to its historic role – the crossroads of transportation and commerce from east to west, between the Persian Gulf and Europe, and from north to south, between Egypt to Syria, Turkey and Russia.

Background

Severe economic recessions tend to end in severe upheavals; they sometimes, surprisingly, are followed by great economic advance. The great international depression of 1929 to 1933 ended in the United States following the establishment of the “New Deal” and the “Tennessee Valley Authority.” In Europe - in the rise of the Nazis to power and the resultant outbreak of World War II. The great depression of 1966 in Israel was broken by the Six Day War and the massive flow of Jewish investment and associated construction projects throughout the Land of Israel.

1. The whole world is in a continuing economic slowdown. The United States has taken over Iraq, but has still not been able to demonstrate its economic (or political) benefits for the Iraqi people. With U.S. initiative and encouragement, a peace treaty has been signed between Israel and Jordan, but this advance has not significantly enhanced the Jordanian economy. That country is still considered economically weak, a member of the Third World. Iraq has now left the axis of Israel’s enemy nations (as officially declared in Iraq), and the Persian Gulf Emirates are waiting for the opportunity for benefiting from a direct transportation connection with the Mediterranean Sea. The United States may be the first to support an economic project that will strengthen Iraq and Jordan.

2. Israel today is undergoing a severe economic crisis. The current crisis is making itself felt in numerous ways, in addition to purely economic losses; these include growing social tensions, cultural and religious discord, and an intensification of Jewish-Arab enmity. The preferred way of reversing this situation is through large-scale development projects, rather than through political or military upheavals which, inevitably, lead to loss of life and massive dislocation.

The paper presents a novel way to resolve this crisis, via a multi-faceted international project that offers great benefits for both local and international interests. It will tap capital and technical resources from the entire world and manpower for development and operations from Israel. The plan is likely to spur major interest in the United States, the European Community, and the Arab nations.

It has recently been proved that transporting petroleum (and perhaps other raw materials) through pipelines can be much cheaper than sea transport, as evinced by the pumping of Russian oil to India via the petroleum pipeline between Ashkelon and Eilat. As long as the Persian Gulf is politically and militarily unstable, due to the destabilizing presence of Iran, the existing Iraqi-Haifa pipeline could serve as a preferable route for transporting petroleum. The land route between Haifa and the Gulf is also attractive for transporting European and Western goods to the East, as far as China, although this is dependent on upgrading the relevant infrastructure.

Turning the area of Haifa Bay into an international commercial center would be an attractive project for the G8 nations, as well as to the east-west axis nations in the Middle East, namely Iraq-Jordan-Israel.

The Project

1. We hereby propose establishing a Linear City in the waters of the Haifa Bay, between Haifa and Acre (a line-of-sight distance of about 14 km.). A linear city is an urban structure that is formed and grows along a line, which is generally its artery of transport for people, for goods and for providing commercial and cultural services.
2. The City will include residences, tourist attractions, and hotels, financial and administrative facilities in its northern areas and sophisticated commodity piers for shipping in the southern area. The latter facility will operate in conjunction with an expanded, deep-water international free port in combination with the existing Haifa port.
3. The shores of Haifa Bay are presently occupied by one of Israel's largest, and most environmentally-damaging, industrial centers, which includes petroleum-refining, chemical- and fertilizer-production and oil storage facilities. Transferring residents living in communities abutting this industrial center to newly constructed homes built over the sea would greatly improve the quality of life of these citizens. Since wind direction is generally from the northwest, west, and southwest, moving the residential area westward, into the Bay, would almost completely eliminate the air pollution currently suffered by communities living to the east, north, and south of the Haifa Bay industrial complex (as lately demonstrated in three cases of heavy pollution).
4. The technology for building a "linear city" over water already exists in Holland, Germany, and Japan (where it was developed in Tokyo Bay, as long ago as the 1970s). Distancing one from the land-based coastal perimeter, with its attendant problems of ownership and bureaucratic restrictions, and entering the area of "extraterritorial" areas, will provide a tremendous boost to international participation by the EC, USA and Japan that will concentrate investments and provide a promising environment for commercial success.
5. The capital invested in this project will enjoy the fruits of real estate investments, international commerce, and the advances in communications and technology that will be developed.

The “City” project will also provide opportunities for investment in transport systems, in particular, a fast train route along the coast from Ashkelon to Lebanon. Israel could in this manner regain its former position as a crossroad - a junction between the Sea Highway from Egypt to Syria, and the highway from the East to the Mediterranean Sea and Europe.

6. With respect to Europe, this project could also aid in uniting all the countries bordering the Mediterranean Basin – from Russia and the Balkan states to the Central European states (the Danube Basin) through to France and Spain.
7. The interests of the United Kingdom in Iraq should ensure her participation, and Japan and European nations would be eager to join by supplying the existing technologies. New technological developments would be carried out in Israel, thereby enabling it to achieve or maintain world-beating capabilities in various disciplines.
8. The Haifa Bay City project could also provide a significant boost to the overall global economy, which continues to be stagnant due to a lack of stimulating new challenges for expanding international trade.
9. Planning and implementation of The Haifa Bay City project will be a solution for the problem of rising sea levels in port cities around the world on one hand, and a solution for the rising human density in coastal areas across the globe, on the other.

Implementation

The advantages of this project are its possible contributions in three key stages:

Initial Stage – Initiation of oil flow from Iraq to Haifa;

Intermediate Stage – Completion of the land infrastructure in Jordan and Iraq for transporting goods, the fast-rail train system in Israel, and the expanded deep-water port facilities in the expanded Haifa Port, with the accompanying logistic requirements.

Final Stage – Building of the Haifa Bay City with all its human and cultural resources, thereby culminating an effort that was initiated around economic infrastructure.

Meetings regarding this Project have taken place with a former commander-in-chief of the Israel Navy, public officials and Israeli economic experts, who have expressed great interest in the ideas underlying this scheme.

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Estimated Project Costs

1. Oil and deep-water shipping port	\$250 M
2. International airport on the reconstructed Bay	\$120 M
3. North-south rail-line – 30 km.	\$100 M
4. West-east rail-line to the Jordan River – 65 km.	\$200 M
5. Platform of the city – 9 km. by 06.5 km.	
a. Residential segment of the platform	\$3000 M
b. Hotel and commercial segment	\$3000 M
6. Residential construction costs – 24,000 residents	\$300 M
7. Hotel construction costs – 5,000 hotel rooms	\$250 M
8. Financial services, computers, management building costs – 500,000 m ²	\$500 M
Initial estimated total costs	7,720 M
Unanticipated expenses (15%)	1,158 M.
Sum total	8,878 M.

Fees and charges – 5% of the above

Planning and supervisory costs – 12% of the total

Pre-pilot stage planning costs

This planning stage will require a group manager, a senior economist, an expert in ports and other transportation facilities, a construction engineer, and a construction quantity surveyor, for a period of two months, at an estimated cost of \$155,000.