

Opening Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Penprapa Vongkovit
Arkia Israeli Airlines inaugural flight service
between Tel Aviv to Bangkok
At Ben Gurion International Airport
23 July 2018, 21.30 hrs.

*Mr. Israel Katz, Minister of Transportation and Intelligence,
Mr. Yoel Feldshaw, Head of Israeli Civil Aviation Authorities,
Mr. Yaakov Ganot, CEO of Israeli Airport Authorities,
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

Erev tov, good evening, it is my great honour to be invited by Mr. Nir Dagan, President and CEO of Arkia Isareli Airlines to make the opening speech on the occasion of its inaugural flight service between Tel Aviv to Bangkok.

As the Ambassador of Thailand, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Mr. Avi Nakash, Chairman & owner, Mr. Dagan, Mr. Oz Berlowitz, CEO of Arkia International, and Mr. Ezer Shafir, Vice President Commercial of Arkia Israeli Airlines on this auspicious occasion and extend my very best wishes for your continued success.

The addition of three flights a week to the existing flights is most welcome, as our Thailand's tourism campaign this year is titled "Open to the New Shades" : meaning that we are promoting visitors to discover new destinations in the 'real Thailand' outside the major cities.

In addition, the business sector will also benefit from this increased connectivity. Thai business are very much aware of the world class innovative products Israel has to offer, and are always looking for collaboration with new partners in Israel, especially in green technologies, pharmaceuticals, biochemicals, agriculture, and IT.

At the same time, I certainly believe that this will help the Israeli businesses explore the vast opportunities for expansion into Southeast Asia, given that Thailand recently launched its Easter Economic Corridor and Thailand 4.0 projects which focus on investment in innovation, and is also focusing on infrastructure development connecting Thailand with the huge mainland Southeast Asian market of over 200 million consumers.

Finally, I look forward to continued enhancement of our close friendship, and of course, to welcoming Israeli visitors to Thailand on behalf of my Thai compatriots!

Thank you.

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