



# STATEMENT of the Minister



## **Avi Dicter** Minister of Public Security

Over the past year, the Ministry of Public Security and all the agencies under its jurisdiction began to take measures aimed at implementing the policy that has been formulated for those agencies; a policy intended to increase the personal safety of Israel's citizens and their general sense of security.

In 2007, the Israel Police undertook a number of important strategic steps, the first one being the transfer of the incarceration and prisoner escort system from the Israel Police to the Israel Prison Service (IPS). The purpose of this step is to turn the IPS into the national incarceration authority and to enable the Israel Police to allocate its resources for the war against crime in all its various forms and to strengthen the personal security of the country's citizens.

The second step concerns the strengthening of the intelligence capabilities of the Israel Police. In the course of last year, emphasis was placed on the organization's reinforcement and on its adaptation for the war against serious crime, with special attention being given to the incorporation of technological tools that will place the Israel Police on the same front-line as other public security and intelligence agencies and which will create a turning-point in the war against severe crime.

Recently, the new National Crime Unit was established in the ranks of the Israel Police: "Lahav 433", which has 950 police officers from five different national units that are actively involved in the war against crime. Together, they create a strong, single body that will be at the forefront of the struggle against crime in all districts throughout the country.

The Ministry of Public Security is also currently in the process of establishing the Israel Witness Protection Authority, an agency that will be yet another important player in the struggle against severe crime.

In the battle against traffic accidents, the Ministry of Public Security is cooperating with the Israel Police in the application of technological means to enforce traffic laws, and the ministry itself is in the advanced stages of preparing a public tender for the activation of an automatic country-wide electronic traffic law enforcement system.

Over the past year, work has begun on the implementation of the nation-wide "City without Violence" program. The main element in this program is collaboration between local communities and all the relevant professional agencies in the struggle against violence. This collaboration is part of the work being conducted by the cabinet ministers' committee on the struggle against violence; a committee in which the Ministry of Public Security and its various agencies play a major role as far as policy implementation is concerned.

The Ministry of Public Security is today investing considerable time and energy in order to increase the level of international cooperation between those agencies involved in homeland security, in the war against global terrorism and in related fields. Over the past year, a memorandum of mutual understanding was signed with the American Department of Homeland Security, agreements of cooperation were signed with the Secretary of State for Security in Spain and the Bulgarian Ministry of Interior, and a joint statement with the Canadian Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness was presented.

The aim of the Ministry of Public Security's short-, medium- and long-range implementation of policy is to reinforce public security in the State of Israel as the country stands on the brink of its 60th anniversary. I wish to express my sincere hope that the implementation of these public security policies will increase the personal security of Israel's citizens and the national security of the State of Israel.