**A Tale of Israeli Ambassador who visited Pakistan, offers hand of friendship**

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November 30, 2020

Israeli Envoy in Washington D.C Ambassador Ron Dermer offered a hand of friendship to Pakistan and said Pakistan and Israel should be able to have good relations.

In an exclusive chat with this correspondent at Embassy of Israel in D.C, Ambassador Ron Dermer was of the view that Pakistan and Israel do not have any border dispute, so why don’t just start talking and establish diplomatic relations.

Ambassador Ron Dermer is the first Israeli Ambassador, who visited Pakistan in mid 90s but at that time he was a US Citizen. “I was not an Israeli citizen when I traveled to Pakistan, he recalled. Refreshing his memories, he told that when he was in Oxford his closest friend was a Pakistani student. “He came to my house in Miami (USA), he visited me for one of the Holidays, we have been great friends, as we were finishing University, he said, I love to host you in Pakistan, he was from Lahore so I went to Lahore and I went to Muree which is very beautiful, although I have to say it makes your heart race when you see people going around those turns with the mountains on the buses and let me tell you whoever makes those buses and color on those buses was also phenomenal, best “art” I saw in Pakistan”. “Then we went to Islamabad and then I flew to Karachi”, he recalled.

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“I had a chance to see your country, its breathtaking, very warm and friendly people, terrific fantastic food, I Keep “kosher” so it&#39;s not easy but my friend’s wife made me all the spices and vegetables and rice, it was absolutely terrific”. “It was a memorable time that I had there and I appreciate very much his friendship, he introduced me to bunch of his friends who were also wonderful people so I think with the people to people relationship between Pakistanis and Israelis between Muslims and Jewish we can solve all the problems, we should have more contacts not less”, he said.

To a question he said that Israelis do not consider Pakistanis as their enemy and Israeli government also does not see the state of Pakistan as enemy, we do not have a border dispute, we should be able to have good relations. “I remember seeing my Pakistani friend’s passport that is valid for all countries except Israel, he recalled.

When asked that if any person who has Pakistani passport can travel to Pakistan, the Ambassador Ron Dermer said “I think if people in Pakistan wanted to come to Israel, wanted to pray there, we probably figure out a way to make it happen because it happened before as my Pakistani friend came to Israel on my wedding”. “When he (Pakistani friend) came to my wedding, which is an interesting thing how it happened, I tried to pull every string I could in order to help him to come to Israel because he said you came to meet my family now I want to come to your wedding and you know what is the first thing he did after the wedding, he went to “Al Aqsa” Mosque to pray at the temple mountain:, he recalled.

“To my friend, I said enjoy the country, you will love it, we had another couple of friends with us, they took him around, he went to saw all Muslim “Holy” sites and that’s the country we are”, an emotional Israeli Ambassador said.

He further said Israel is an open country, respects peoples’ religious faith and it&#39;s only under Israel’s rule where there is a true freedom of religion. “If Pakistanis could see it by themselves, they probably understand that some of the things they have been told about the situation in Israel is just not true”.

“My Pakistani friend saw it firsthand and maybe one day we will have many Pakistanis seeing the truth by themselves”, he hoped.

When asked that if there was any diplomatic contact between Pakistan and Israel during former President Musharraf’s regime, the Israeli Ambassador in Washington said “we want to have better relations with all the countries including Pakistan and I see no reason as we do not have any dispute but I understand there is a longstanding grievances but remember things are changing for Israel in Middle East, people have now much closer ties”, he noticed. “We want to improve our relations with all the countries and I do not see any reason why country like Pakistan could not have better relations with Israel, many Muslim countries have good relations with Israel now and they all are getting great benefits”. “They have access to this technology, if you think about it there is a traditional boycott of Israel, it’s like Oregon, Utah, Nevada, Arizona and half of the California boycotting “Silicon Valley” does not make any sense, we are right there in the centre of the region, why not benefit of this cooperation with Israel, why not solved border problem in the Middle East and beyond, why not solve agriculture problem, why not help your people with so many issues they face and Israel can be a great source of technology not only Middle East and beyond but everywhere”, he said.

To a question about Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, the Israeli Ambassador said that he read couple of articles about him, I love sports so anytime any great sportsman become the head of the government, I think that’s good because believe it or not sports brings people together, I know he was the greatest cricketer in the world”. Recalling his memories with “Cricket” he said he twisted his arm while bowling to his Pakistani friend.

“I hope Prime Minister Imran Khan will make Pakistan more prosperous, more secure and maybe we can push forward in relations between Israel and Pakistan”. “I think it will be a very good thing for our countries to turn the page to establish better relations and I think that would be good for the people of Pakistan and for the people of Israel”, he concluded.

Jahanzaib Ali is a journalist, author, based in Washington D.C. He is the Chief Correspondent for ARY NEWS. He has been working in the field for 15 years now focusing on Foreign Policy.