



Ambassador Issa Jamil Kassissieh

Mr. Issa Jamil Kassissieh: Ambassador to the Holy See and to the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, Deputy Head at the Negotiations Affairs Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The department is responsible for permanent status negotiations with the State of Israel. Prior to his current position at NAD, Mr. Kassissieh served as a Senior Policy Advisor responsible for foreign diplomatic relations at the Office of President Mahmoud Abbas. As an expert on the issue of Jerusalem, Mr. Kassissieh has been involved in both official and second-track negotiations with the Israelis. Prior to that, Mr. Kassissieh served as head of the “European Desk” at the Orient House in Jerusalem (headquarters of the Palestinian Team to the Peace Talks) where he worked closely with the late Mr. Faisal Husseini, and was coordinator of the Palestinian team for multilateral talks and in addition he dealt with Jerusalem issues and church affairs. Mr. Kassissieh serves as member of the Presidential Committee on Church Affairs, a member of the Presidential Delegation to the Negotiations with the Holy See, and a member of the Presidential Committee for the Renovation of the Nativity Church. In 2000, he was member of the Palestinian delegation to the Basic Agreement signed then. He led the negotiations with the Holy See during the last three years, which culminated in the signature of the Comprehensive Agreement between the State of Palestine and the Holy See. He also served as the main focal point for the preparations of the Peace Prayer that His Holiness attended by President Abbas and Former President of the state of Israel Shimon Perez. He is also involved in the interfaith dialogue with the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land.

Kassissieh received a Master degree in Public Administration from Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government - USA, a Masters in Diplomacy and Statecraft from the University of Birmingham - UK, and another Masters in International Studies from the Birzeit University. His undergraduate degree was obtained from the University of Bethlehem. He was awarded the "Raymond & Josephine Vernon

Book Award for Academic Distinction" at the John F Kennedy School of Government in June 2004. He also received a medal from the Russian Orthodox Association in Palestine in 2012. Moreover, on behalf of the President of the Italian Republic, he was awarded the "L'onor Eficenza di Cavaliere" in June 2013. He is member of several philanthropic and civil society organizations such as chairman of the board at Al Ma'mal Foundation for Contemporary Art, and deputy chairman of the YMCA's board in Jerusalem. He contributes often o-peds and articles locally. Mr. Kassissieh is a Jerusalemite, married with 3 children, and was born in 1964.