

Gov. Rauner advances tech initiatives during first of five days in Israel

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TEL AVIV, Israel — A new, first-of-its kind partnership between the University of Illinois and Tel Aviv University in Israel will advance groundbreaking engineering and technology initiatives and foster economic growth in Illinois and abroad, Gov. Bruce Rauner said today during a visit to the Middle Eastern nation.



Rauner is traveling through Israel this week with Deputy Gov. Leslie Munger, U of I System President Timothy Killeen and several other U of I System officials. The delegation is in Israel to develop research partnerships between the U of I System and top Israeli universities.

The trip builds on the establishment earlier this month of the Illinois Innovation Network and the announced plans for the Discovery Partners Institute, a U of I led enterprise whose mission is to develop advances that will make Illinois the next major technological innovation center of the U.S.

“Today marks a new era of collaboration with Tel Aviv University, an institution that has developed a reputation for genius in the technology and engineering fields — key drivers of economic progress,” Rauner said Monday after an MOU signing ceremony. “Illinois, Israel and the world will benefit from the exchange of faculty and students, cooperative programs and research opportunities now on the horizon.”

Killeen said he is confident U of I’s newly established partnership with Tel Aviv will prove historic.

“Tel Aviv University is Israel’s largest and most comprehensive university, with a deep commitment to student success and research discovery that matches ours across the University of Illinois System,” Killeen said. “This agreement is an important first step to build on life-changing learning and cultural exchanges for students, and foster research collaborations to solve global challenges and drive progress and economic growth.”

“Tel Aviv University is always looking for cooperation with leading universities worldwide,” the university’s president, Joseph Klafter, said. “Since science is becoming more global, partnerships like this are so important.”

Monday’s itinerary also included meetings with Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Start-Up Nation Central Chief Executive Officer Eugene Kandel, members of the Israel Innovation Authority and dinner with Israeli business people and officials.

