

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY LTD (CC)

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Herzog & de Meuron, 2001 Pritzker Prize Laureates,

Selected to Design the National Library of Israel

Jerusalem, 25 April 2013 – The National Library Construction Company is pleased to announce the selection of the architects to design the new home of the National Library of Israel.

A panel, headed by Prof. Luis Fernández-Galiano and including Prof. Elinor Komissar-Barzachi, Lord Rothschild, Chair of Yad Hanadiv, and David Blumberg, Chair of the Library, had the privilege of interviewing six architecture firms, three leading offices from Israel and three of the world's most distinguished ones (alphabetical order) – Ammar Curiel; Frank Gehry; Herzog & de Meuron; Kimmel Eshkolot, Kolker Kolker Epstein and Renzo Piano. The 90-minute interviews enabled the members of the panel and the architects better to understand the site and surroundings, and the needs of the Library as a place for research and social activity. The panel explored the approaches and methods of the six offices.

After extensive discussions, the panel decided to recommend the Swiss office of Herzog & de Meuron to be the architects for the National Library of Israel. The panel, which was already aware of the many significant works of these Pritzker prize laureates, was extraordinarily impressed by the commitment shown by Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, as well as by the strengths and promise of their architectural approach – their handling of the natural and urban landscape, the connection with the surrounding institutions and the interpretation of the Library programme. It was both innovative and clearly focused.

The Swiss architects, whose main office is in Basel, have a strong and creative team and wide experience in cultural projects including libraries. They shared a clear openness to dialogue with the client, bringing their experience and precise working methods to the design process.

The recommendation of the panel for the architect (who will become the Selected Architect upon entering into an agreement), has been approved by the Board of Directors of the National Library and by the Board of Directors of the National Library Construction Company.