

## Heard on the Hill

**House Backs Security Assistance to Israel.** The House passed legislation that authorizes \$2.55 billion in security assistance to Israel for fiscal year 2009, and endorses the implementation of a 10-year U.S.-Israeli security agreement that pledges \$30 billion in security assistance to Israel over the next decade.

The United States plans to provide increased security assistance to Israel to help the two countries face growing threats in the region.

The bill, which passed by voice vote, also requires the president to evaluate on an ongoing basis the extent to which Israel has a qualitative military edge over all possible military threats, and to assess all future U.S. military sales in that context.



**Bipartisan House Delegation Visits Israel to Celebrate 60th Anniversary.** A bipartisan delegation of leading House members visited Israel to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Jewish state's founding.

The 13-member delegation was led by Speaker of the House NANCY PELOSI (D-CA), House Majority Leader STENY HOYER (D-MD), Republican Conference Chairman ADAM PUTNAM (R-FL) and House Committee on Rules Ranking Member DAVID DREIER (R-CA). The delegation met with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, President Shimon Peres, Defense Minister Ehud Barak, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, Knesset Speaker Dalia Itzik and opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu, among others.

In addition to Pelosi, Hoyer, Dreier and Putnam, the delegation included Reps. GARY ACKERMAN (D-CA), HOWARD BERMAN (D-CA), RAHM EMANUEL (D-IL), JANE HARMAN (D-CA), ALCEE HASTINGS (D-FL), RON KLEIN (D-FL), JOHN LARSON (D-CT), NITA LOWEY (D-NY) and HENRY WAXMAN (D-CA). •NER•

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# NEAR EAST

## Report

JUNE 1-15, 2008

**AIPAC'S BIWEEKLY ON AMERICAN  
MIDDLE EAST POLICY**

### EDITOR'S COMMENTS

#### Deep Alliance

Joyous celebrations around the world this month have marked Israel's 60th anniversary and its astounding achievements in all spheres of life. The close U.S.-Israel ties during this period have played a key role in ensuring Israel's security. The president's extraordinary Knesset speech (full text inside this issue) highlighted the depth of this historic alliance. The concurrent visit to Israel by Democratic House leaders underlined the alliance's bipartisan nature.

The U.S.-Israel alliance, President Bush said, "is unbreakable, yet the source of our friendship runs deeper than any treaty. It is grounded in the shared spirit of our people, the bonds of the Book, the ties of the soul." The president expressed deep admiration for Israel's success in forging "a free and modern society based on a love of liberty, a passion for justice, a respect for human dignity."

Bush's speech could not have come at a more critical time. It constituted not only an affirmation of the two allies' common values, but also an assertion of their future application to U.S.-Israel relations as they work together to con-  
...see *Editor's Comments cont'd* on pg. 34

## Within Range

**HAMAS LAUNCHES MORE  
SOPHISTICATED ROCKETS AT ISRAEL**

The terrorist group Hamas is using increasingly sophisticated weaponry to attack Israel, employing longer-range, Iranian-supplied rockets that put more than 250,000 Israelis living in southern cities, such as Ashkelon, within striking range.

Israelis received a painful reminder of Hamas' capabilities on May 14, when a Katyusha-style Grad rocket slammed into a shopping mall in Ashkelon, wounding dozens of people, including a two-year-old girl. Israeli police commander Maj. Gen. Uriel Bar-Lev said bomb experts had determined that the rocket "has Iranian fingerprints on it." Hamas lauded the attack.



Photo by the Associated Press

**Israeli emergency personnel inspect the damage to an Ashkelon mall hit by a Grad rocket.**

In the face of such assaults, the United States has consistently reiterated Israel's right to defend itself and denounced Hamas, which has deliberately targeted civilians.

But that May 14 attack represented merely a small component of Hamas' terrorist infrastructure.

Hamas is smuggling into Gaza longer-range rockets, anti-tank weapons, anti-aircraft missiles and other advanced weapons intended to kill Israelis.

A recent report by the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (ITTC) in Israel says Hamas has more than 20,000 armed fighters organized in semi-military formations under improved command and control. Many of these fighters are being  
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## Landmark Address

IN A SPEECH TO THE ISRAELI KNESSET, PRESIDENT BUSH DISCUSSED THE SHARED VALUES AND COMMON GOALS THAT HAVE EMBODIED THE U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP FOR THE PAST 60 YEARS

President Peres and Mr. Prime Minister, Madam Speaker, thank very much for hosting this special session. President Beinish, Leader of the Opposition Netanyahu, Ministers, members of the Knesset, distinguished guests: Shalom. Laura and I are thrilled to be back in Israel. We have been deeply moved by the celebrations of the past two days. And this afternoon, I am honored to stand before one of the world's great democratic assemblies and convey the wishes of the American people with these words: Yom Ha'atzmaut Sameach.

It is a rare privilege for the American President to speak to the Knesset. Although the Prime Minister told me there is something even rarer—to have just one person in this chamber speaking at a time. My only regret is that one of Israel's greatest leaders is not here to share this moment. He is a warrior for the ages, a man of peace, a friend. The prayers of the American people are with Ariel Sharon.

### The U.S. and Israel Have Shared a Deep Friendship for 60 Years

We gather to mark a momentous occasion. Sixty years ago in Tel Aviv, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed Israel's independence, founded on the "natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate." What followed was more than the establishment of a new country. It was the redemption of an ancient promise given to Abraham and Moses and David—a homeland for the chosen people Eretz Yisrael.

Eleven minutes later, on the orders of President Harry Truman, the United States was proud to be the first nation to recognize Israel's independence. And on this landmark anniversary, America is proud to be Israel's closest ally and best friend in the world.

The alliance between our governments is unbreakable, yet the source of our friendship runs deeper than any treaty. It is grounded in the shared spirit of our people, the bonds of the Book, the ties of the soul. When William Bradford stepped off the Mayflower in 1620, he quoted the words of Jeremiah: "Come let us declare in Zion the word of God." The founders of my country saw a new promised land and bestowed upon their towns names like Bethlehem and New



PRESIDENT  
GEORGE W. BUSH

• EXCERPTS FROM ADDRESS  
TO MEMBERS OF THE KNESSET •  
MAY 15, 2008



Photo by the Associated Press

President Bush said "America is proud to be Israel's closest ally and best friend in the world."

Canaan. And in time, many Americans became passionate advocates for a Jewish state.

Centuries of suffering and sacrifice would pass before the dream was fulfilled. The Jewish people endured the agony of the pogroms, the tragedy of the Great War, and the horror of the Holocaust—what Elie Wiesel called "the kingdom of the night." Soulless men took away lives and broke apart families. Yet they could not take away the spirit of the Jewish people, and they could not break the promise of God. When news of Israel's freedom finally arrived, Golda Meir, a fearless woman raised in Wisconsin, could sum-

mon only tears. She later said: "For two thousand years we have waited for our deliverance. Now that it is here it is so great and wonderful that it surpasses human words."

### Israel Has Accomplished Extraordinary Achievements

The joy of independence was tempered by the outbreak of battle, a struggle that has continued for six decades. Yet in spite of the violence, in defiance of the threats, Israel has built a thriving democracy in the heart of the Holy Land. You have welcomed immigrants from the four corners of the Earth. You have forged a free and modern society based on the love of liberty, a passion for justice, and a respect for human dignity. You have worked tirelessly for peace. You have fought valiantly for freedom.

My country's admiration for Israel does not end there. When Americans look at Israel, we see a pioneer spirit that worked an agricultural miracle and now leads a high-tech revolution. We see world-class universities and a global leader in business and innovation and the arts. We see a resource more valuable than oil or gold: the talent and determination of a free people who refuse to let any obstacle stand in the way of their destiny.

I have been fortunate to see the character of Israel up close. I have touched the Western Wall, seen the sun reflected in the Sea of Galilee, I have prayed at Yad Vashem. And earlier today, I visited Masada, an inspiring monument to courage and sacrifice. At this historic site, Israeli soldiers swear an oath: "Masada shall never fall again." Citizens of Israel: Masada shall never fall again, and America will be at your side.

This anniversary is a time to reflect on the past. It's also an opportunity to look to the future. As we go forward, our alliance will be guided by clear principles—shared convictions rooted in moral clarity and unswayed by popularity polls or the shifting opinions of international elites.

We believe in the matchless value of every man, woman, and child. So we insist that the people of Israel have the right to a decent, normal, and peaceful life, just like the citizens of every other nation.

## **The World Must Fight Anti-Semitism and Terror**

We believe that democracy is the only way to ensure human rights. So we consider it a source of shame that the United Nations routinely passes more human rights resolutions against the freest democracy in the Middle East than any other nation in the world.

We believe that religious liberty is fundamental to a civilized society. So we condemn anti-Semitism in all forms—whether by those who openly question Israel's right to exist, or by others who quietly excuse them.

We believe that free people should strive and sacrifice for peace. So we applaud the courageous choices Israeli's leaders have made. We also believe that nations have a right to defend themselves and that no nation should ever be forced to negotiate with killers pledged to its destruction.

We believe that targeting innocent lives to achieve political objectives is always and everywhere wrong. So we stand together against terror and extremism, and we will never let down our guard or lose our resolve.

The fight against terror and extremism is the defining challenge of our time. It is more than a clash of arms. It is a clash of visions, a great ideological struggle. On the one side are those who defend the ideals of justice and dignity with the power of reason and truth. On the other side are those who pursue a narrow vision of cruelty and control by committing murder, inciting fear, and spreading lies.

This struggle is waged with the technology of the 21st century, but at its core it is an ancient battle between good and evil.

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**ISRAEL'S POPULATION  
MAY BE JUST OVER 7 MILLION.  
BUT WHEN YOU CONFRONT  
TERROR AND EVIL, YOU ARE  
307 MILLION STRONG,  
BECAUSE THE UNITED STATES OF  
AMERICA STANDS WITH YOU.**

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The killers claim the mantle of Islam, but they are not religious men. No one who prays to the God of Abraham could strap a suicide vest to an innocent child, or blow up guiltless guests at a Passover Seder, or fly planes into office buildings filled with unsuspecting workers. In truth, the men

who carry out these savage acts serve no higher goal than their own desire for power. They accept no God before themselves. And they reserve a special hatred for the most ardent defenders of liberty, including Americans and Israelis.

And that is why the founding charter of Hamas calls for the "elimination" of Israel. And that is why the followers of Hizballah chant "Death to Israel, Death to America!"

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**YOU HAVE BUILT A  
MIGHTY DEMOCRACY THAT WILL  
ENDURE FOREVER AND CAN  
ALWAYS COUNT ON THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
TO BE AT YOUR SIDE.**

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That is why Osama bin Laden teaches that "the killing of Jews and Americans is one of the biggest duties." And that is why the President of Iran dreams of returning the Middle East to the Middle Ages and calls for Israel to be wiped off the map.

There are good and decent people who cannot fathom the darkness in these men and try to explain away their words. It's natural, but it is deadly wrong. As witnesses to evil in the past, we carry a solemn responsibility to take these words seriously. Jews and Americans have seen the consequences of disregarding the words of leaders who espouse hatred. And that is a mistake the world must not repeat in the 21st century.

### **The American People Will Always Stand By Israel**

Some seem to believe that we should negotiate with the terrorists and radicals, as if some ingenious argument will persuade them they have been wrong all along. We have heard this foolish delusion before. As Nazi tanks crossed into Poland in 1939, an American senator declared: "Lord, if I could only have talked to Hitler, all this might have been avoided." We have an obligation to call this what it is—the false comfort of appeasement, which has been repeatedly discredited by history.

Some people suggest if the United States would just break ties with Israel, all our problems in the Middle East would go away. This is a tired argument that buys into the propaganda of the enemies of peace, and America utterly rejects it. Israel's population may be just over 7 million. But when you

confront terror and evil, you are 307 million strong, because the United States of America stands with you.

America stands with you in breaking up terrorist networks and denying the extremists sanctuary. America stands with you in firmly opposing Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions. Permitting the world's leading sponsor of terror to possess the world's deadliest weapons would be an unforgivable betrayal for future generations. For the sake of peace, the world must not allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon.

### **Free and Tolerant Societies Will Not Export Terror**

Ultimately, to prevail in this struggle, we must offer an alternative to the ideology of the extremists by extending our vision of justice and tolerance and freedom and hope. These values are the self-evident right of all people, of all religions, in all the world because they are a gift from the Almighty God. Securing these rights is also the surest way to secure peace. Leaders who are accountable to their people will not pursue endless confrontation and bloodshed. Young people with a place in their society and a voice in their future are less likely to search for meaning in radicalism. Societies where citizens can express their conscience and worship their God will not export violence, they will be partners in peace.

The fundamental insight, that freedom yields peace, is the great lesson of the 20th century. Now our task is to apply it to the 21st. Nowhere is this work more urgent than here in the Middle East. We must stand with the reformers working to break the old patterns of tyranny and despair. We must give voice to millions of ordinary people who dream of a better life in a free society. We must confront the moral relativism that views all forms of government as equally acceptable and thereby consigns whole societies to slavery. Above all, we must have faith in our values and ourselves and confidently pursue the expansion of liberty as the path to a peaceful future.

### **The Middle East Will Be Transformed**

That future will be a dramatic departure from the Middle East of today. So as we mark 60 years from Israel's founding, let us try to envision the region 60 years from now.

This vision is not going to arrive easily or overnight; it will encounter violent resistance. But if we and future Presidents and future Knessets maintain our resolve and have faith in our ideals, here is the Middle East that we can see:

Israel will be celebrating the 120th anniversary as one of the world's great democracies, a secure and flourishing homeland for the Jewish people. The

is reinforced by ties of diplomacy and tourism and trade. Iran and Syria will be peaceful nations, with today's oppression a distant memory and where people are free to speak their minds and develop their God-given talents. Al Qaeda and Hizballah and Hamas will be defeated, as Muslims across the region recognize the emptiness of the terrorists' vision and the injustice of their cause.

suicide bombings. With this change, Israel will open a new hopeful chapter in which its people can live a normal life, and the dream of Herzl and the founders of 1948 can be fully and finally realized.

This is a bold vision, and some will say it can never be achieved. But think about what we have witnessed in our own time. When Europe was destroying itself through total war and genocide, it was difficult to envision a continent that six decades later would be free and at peace. When Japanese pilots were flying suicide missions into American battleships, it seemed impossible that six decades later Japan would be a democracy, a lynchpin of security in Asia, and one of America's closest friends. And when waves of refugees arrived here in the desert with nothing, surrounded by hostile armies, it was almost unimaginable that Israel would grow into one of the freest and most successful nations on the earth.

Yet each one of these transformations took place. And a future of transformation is possible in the Middle East, so long as a new generation of leaders has the courage to defeat the enemies of freedom, to make the hard choices necessary for peace, and stand firm on the solid rock of universal values.

**Israel is a 'Light Unto the Nations'**  
Sixty years ago, on the eve of Israel's independence, the last British soldiers departing Jerusalem stopped at a building in the Jewish quarter of the Old City. An officer knocked on the door and met a senior rabbi. The officer presented him with a short iron bar—the key to the Zion Gate—and said it was the first time in 18 centuries that a key to the gates of Jerusalem had belonged to a Jew. His hands trembling, the rabbi offered a prayer of thanksgiving to God, “Who had granted us life and permitted us to reach this day.” Then he turned to the officer, and uttered the words Jews had awaited for so long: “I accept this key in the name of my people.”

Over the past six decades, the Jewish people have established a state that would make that humble rabbi proud. You have raised a modern society in the Promised Land, a light unto the nations that preserves the legacy of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. And you have built a mighty democracy that will endure forever and can always count on the United States of America to be at your side. God bless. •NER•

#### A Historic Visit

President Bush made a landmark trip to Israel, delivering an address to the Knesset and visiting the ancient Jewish site of Masada, among other places.

#### A Bipartisan Tradition

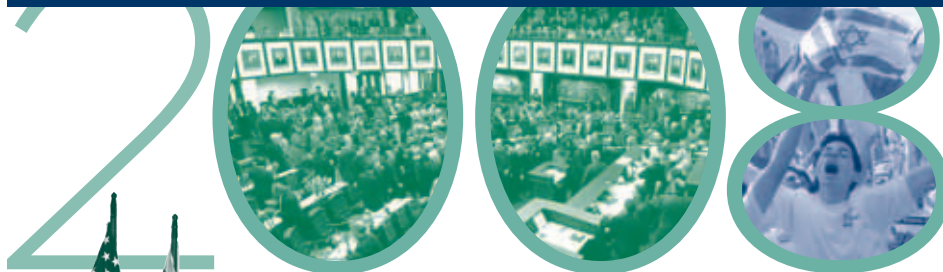
Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) led a bipartisan, 13-member delegation of House members on a trip to Israel to celebrate the anniversary festivities.

#### Congress Unites Behind Israel

The House and Senate overwhelmingly passed resolutions recognizing Israel's 60th anniversary and saluting the Jewish state for its accomplishments. Members have delivered more than 100 floor speeches in honor of Israel.



## CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP



#### States Reaffirm Support

More than a dozen state legislatures have passed resolutions celebrating Israel's 60th anniversary.

#### Students Join the Celebrations

Students at more than 250 campuses across the United States have held celebrations honoring Israel.



Palestinian people will have the homeland they have long dreamed of and deserved—a democratic state that is governed by law, and respects human rights, and rejects terror. From Cairo to Riyadh to Baghdad and Beirut, people will live in free and independent societies, where a desire for peace

Overall, the Middle East will be characterized by a new period of tolerance and integration. And this doesn't mean that Israel and its neighbors will be best of friends. But when leaders across the region answer to their people, they will focus their energies on schools and jobs, not on rocket attacks and

## Vital Boost

IN THE FACE OF INCREASED REGIONAL THREATS, THE UNITED STATES IS WORKING TO ENSURE THAT ISRAEL MAINTAINS ITS QUALITATIVE MILITARY EDGE OVER POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES

A potential nuclear-armed Iran. Waves of Hamas rocket attacks from Gaza against Israeli civilians. A resurgent Hizballah armed with 40,000 rockets aimed at Israel.

These are just some of the unprecedented threats that Israel, along with its ally the United States, is facing. To help confront these threats, the United States and Israel last August signed a new 10-year security agreement that aims to provide the Jewish state with \$30 billion in security assistance over the next decade.

### Iran Remains the Key Threat

One of the key challenges that the United States and Israel face is an increasingly aggressive and belligerent Iran.

Tehran—whose leadership calls for Israel's destruction and for a world without the United States—continues to advance its uranium enrichment efforts and could have a nuclear weapons capability within two years. The regime also can deploy a sizable force of sophisticated Shihab missiles that can hit Israel, U.S. forces in the region and America's regional allies. And during the next decade, Iran also may acquire intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of striking the United States.

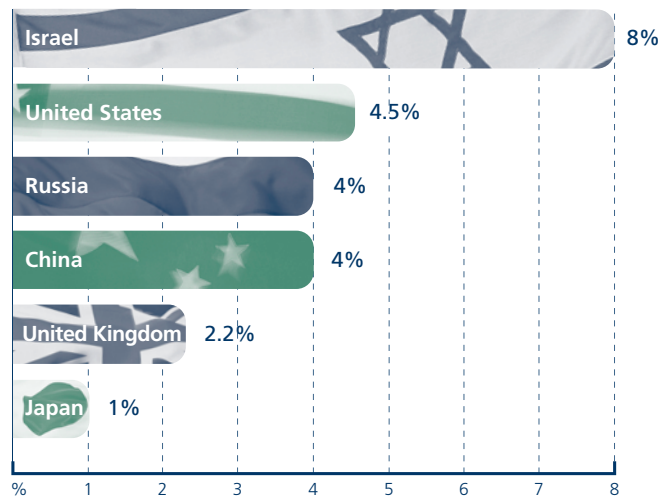
Iran also continues to serve as the major destabilizing force in the region through its continued support of terrorist groups that are threatening Israel and working to undermine U.S. efforts in the region, from Israeli-Palestinian talks to Lebanon to Iraq.

### Hamas and Hizballah Continue to Foment Violence

With the help of Iran, Hamas—which violently took control of Gaza a year ago—is transforming itself into a terrorist army, carrying out daily attacks on Israel and undermining U.S.-backed Israeli-Palestinian talks.

Since Israel fully withdrew from Gaza in 2005, Hamas and other groups have terrorized Israeli civilians by firing more than 4,000 rockets and mortars into Israel. Hamas also continues to smuggle into Gaza more advanced weaponry and has estab-

### ISRAEL'S HEAVY BURDEN PERCENTAGE OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT SPENT ON DEFENSE



lished a force of more than 20,000 armed fighters, many of whom have been trained in Iran or Syria.

In the north—Hizballah—with the help of Iran and Syria, has restored and enhanced its arsenal, amassing 40,000 rockets and missiles, or nearly three times the amount it had before the war with Israel in 2006. Meanwhile, the Syrian military has embarked on a modernization effort and arms-buying spree not seen since the 1980s, purchasing more sophisticated anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles from Russia and amassing an alarming arsenal of long-range missiles and short-range rockets.

### Israel Faces Greater Costs to Combat New Threats

In addition to the increased threats, spiraling defense costs are forcing Israel to spend more on defense as a percentage of gross domestic product than any other nation in the industrialized world. Israel is spending eight percent of its GDP on defense, or nearly double the percentage the United States spends.

Israel has committed to a 10-year plan of sustained increases in its own defense spending to accompany the expected growth in U.S. security assistance. Israel is slated to spend \$150 billion on defense during the next decade, a 50 percent increase over the previous 10-year period.

This increased spending comes as over-

all regional military spending has accelerated throughout the Middle East, fueled by windfall oil profits. From 2002 to 2006, the growth rate of Saudi Arabia's military budget was almost six times that of Israel's, while Iran's rate of military spending grew 16 times more than the Jewish state's.

The military hardware—including American-built advanced fighter aircraft and naval vessels—that the IDF must acquire over the next decade to maintain its qualitative military edge is more complex, diverse and expensive than previous systems.

The most recent U.S.-produced front-line fighter aircraft deployed by Israel—the F-16I—cost \$45 million. By comparison the U.S. F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, which Israel is seeking to purchase in the next decade, may cost up to \$100 million each.

### U.S.-Israel Security Deal Aims to Boost Aid

In an effort to ensure that Israel maintains its qualitative military edge over those adversaries that threaten the Jewish state and actively work to undermine U.S. interests in the region, the administration has requested \$2.55 billion in military assistance for fiscal year 2009. The request represents the first year of the new 10-year agreement and is subject to congressional approval. Under the agreement, Israel is slated to receive gradual increases in aid over the next four years—before leveling off at \$3.1 billion for the remaining six years.

The House in May approved a bill that authorizes the administration's request for fiscal year 2009 and endorses the full 10-year agreement. Congressional appropriators still need to fund the yearly requests for military assistance for Israel through the annual foreign aid bill.

Amid the increased threats and rising defense costs, such a boost in U.S. assistance to Israel during the next decade will be vital as the two allies work together to seek peace and defeat the forces of extremism. •NER•

front Islamist extremism.

The overarching threat of radical Islamism—incarnated by a belligerent Iran seeking nuclear weapons, a brutal Hamas targeting Israeli civilians and a resurgent Hizballah preparing for renewed war with Israel—promises to challenge both countries with growing intensity. Yet the president emphasized that confronting them requires promoting the very values of human dignity embodied by Israel and America, which emerged in the face of stupefying odds and defeated numerically superior foes.

“Shared convictions rooted in moral clarity”—so said the president to describe the principles underlying the U.S.-Israel alliance. His words reflected the bipartisan consensus shared by the vast majority of Americans concerning this relationship, which spans party lines and political ideologies. It is a permanent alliance, one that finds expression not in individual leaders, or in partisan tendentiousness, or in the fleeting expediencies of diplomacy.

Leading a bipartisan congressional delegation to Israel, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) expressed similar sentiments. “We are countries that were created by pioneers, grown by immigrants, and committed to democracy,” she said, and called Israel “a beacon of hope to the world.”

As we celebrate 60 years of the U.S.-Israel alliance, it remains incumbent upon the pro-Israel community to nurture it for another 60 years to come, and beyond. •NER•

## Relieving Disaster

### ISRAEL BRINGS AID AND SUPPORT TO VICTIMS IN BURMA, CHINA

Following a devastating cyclone in Burma on May 2 and an earthquake in China on May 12, Israel has joined the international efforts to bring aid to victims in South East Asia.

As the death count climbs to close to 100,000 in Burma, Israeli governmental and non-governmental agencies are partnering with the United Nations to bring emergency supplies, rescue workers and physicians to the hard-hit areas in the Irrawaddy Delta and Yangon, the nation's main city. Soon after the disaster hit, the Israeli Foreign Ministry pledged an initial \$100,000 aid package of medical supplies, food and water filters. The government has also sent IDF search-and-rescue teams and a 10-member delegation of doctors and nurses.

Additionally, IsraAID, an umbrella organization of 15 Israeli NGOs, is coordinating another group of aid workers who have already arrived in Burma and have begun addressing the needs of the local communities. IsraAID, the American

Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, MASHAV, Magen David Adom (the Israeli Red Cross), and other organizations are also working on a large-scale humanitarian relief effort.

China's government has also appealed for international aid for survivors of the 7.9-magnitude quake which has killed more than 50,000 people and has left hundreds of thousands of people homeless. The first Israeli shipment of aid, including sleeping bags, blankets, and 800 personal water purifiers, arrived in China on May 22. An additional shipment of \$1.5 million worth of equipment arrived a few days later.

Israel's role in helping in the aftermath of such natural disasters is part of a long tradition in Israeli history of supporting growth in developing nations and disaster relief across the globe. Today, Israel has one of the most extensive foreign assistance programs in the world, contributing to relief efforts following such events as the tsunami in Sri Lanka, Hurricane Katrina and the genocide in Rwanda. •NER•

### Within Range....cont'd from pg. 29

sent for training to Iran and Syria.

Such threats have prompted the United States to emphasize its strong support for Israel and to condemn Hamas' actions.

On May 15, in his historic speech to the Knesset, President Bush said America believes that “nations have a right to defend themselves and that no nation


should ever be forced to negotiate with killers pledged to its destruction.”

In March, the House resoundingly passed a resolution by a vote of 404-1 that expresses support for Israel's right to self-defense, noting that the “near-daily rocket fire has been targeted primarily and intentionally at civilian communities in Israel, such as Sderot and Ashkelon, making life in such areas agonizing.” •NER•

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