

## Heard on the Hill

**Lawmakers Voice Objections to U.S.-Russia Nuclear Agreement.** During a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, senior members from both sides of the aisle criticized the pending U.S.-Russia nuclear cooperation agreement, citing Moscow's support for Iran's illicit nuclear program. Chairman HOWARD BERMAN (D-CA) questioned whether Russia "has been a good enough partner in helping us bring Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons to a halt." Ranking Member ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN (R-FL) noted that the agreement "will inevitably be seen in Moscow and elsewhere as a political reward, one bestowed by the U.S. despite the Russian government's continuing assistance to Iran."

The agreement comes as the Senate is considering legislation that includes provisions conditioning the implementation of any U.S.-Russia nuclear cooperation agreement on presidential certification that Russia has ceased nuclear cooperation with Iran. Sanctions legislation (H.R. 1400) passed the House last year by a resounding vote of 397-16. Legislation introduced by Sens. GORDON SMITH (R-OR) and DICK DURBIN (D-IL) is pending in the Senate.

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**House Members Call for Action on Iran.** Senior House members highlighted the danger of Iran's nuclear program and support for terrorism at a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee focusing on Iran's strategic aspirations. Chairman GARY ACKERMAN (D-NY) called for further action to stop Tehran's destructive behavior, noting that Iran is facilitating the deaths of American soldiers in Iraq and supporting terrorist groups throughout the region.

Ranking Member MIKE PENCE (R-IN) echoed the chairman's call to action, voicing support for a resolution (H. Con. Res. 362) he introduced with Ackerman that calls upon the administration to impose more stringent sanctions on Iran. •NER•

## INSIDE

### Worth Repeating:

Addresses by Top Speakers at AIPAC Policy Conference 2008

# NEAR EAST

## Report

JUNE 16-30, 2008

AIPAC'S BIWEEKLY ON AMERICAN MIDDLE EAST POLICY

### EDITOR'S COMMENTS

#### A Remarkable Event

In this heated campaign season, where partisan bickering consumes Washington, it is rare for politicians from both sides of the aisle to publicly stand together to support a common cause.

But that's exactly what happened earlier this month at the AIPAC Policy Conference. The bipartisan leaders of Congress all stood before AIPAC activists and emphasized their support for the U.S.-Israel alliance.

In addition, nearly half the Congress—204 House members and 44 Senators—attended the Gala Banquet, which filled a room big enough to fit the Washington Monument on its side. Is there any other event that can bring together more members of Congress in one room, aside from the president's State of the Union address?

On top of all this, the three most talked about figures in American politics—Clinton, McCain, Obama—addressed conference delegates. Each of them received multiple standing ovations for their strong commitment to a secure Israel.

It is important to understand the meaning of the candidates' appearances at AIPAC. They were not just speaking ...see *Editor's Comments cont'd on pg. 42*

## Built to Last

AIPAC'S ANNUAL POLICY CONFERENCE SOLIDIFIES U.S.-ISRAEL TIES

More than 7,000 activists, students and scholars from all 50 states traveled to the nation's capital, June 2-4, for the pro-Israel community's premier annual event: the AIPAC Policy Conference.

The conference—AIPAC's largest ever—featured addresses from top U.S. policymakers, including Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and the bipartisan leadership of the House and Senate.

Both the Democratic and Republican presumptive nominees for president—Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL) and Sen. John McCain (R-AZ)—spoke to the record



Photo by AIPAC

AIPAC Policy Conference 2008 was the organization's largest-ever annual event.

crowd, as did then-Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY).

At the Gala Banquet, attended by nearly half the Congress, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expressed the Jewish state's deep appreciation for AIPAC's work, which, he said, "ensures that the alliance between Israel and the United States is never taken for granted."

Delegates were also treated to two major panel discussions. The first one, moderated by Dan Senor, focused on U.S. foreign policy, and the second, led by David Horowitz, focused on the future of the Jewish people.

Conference programming featured nearly 100 breakout sessions, and delegates participated in more than 500 Capitol Hill meetings with their lawmakers. •NER•

## Legislative Impact

THOUSANDS OF AIPAC ACTIVISTS LOBBY THEIR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO SUPPORT U.S. AID TO ISRAEL AND ENACT MORE STRINGENT IRAN SANCTIONS

In a resounding show of support for the U.S.-Israel relationship, 5,000 pro-Israel activists ascended Capitol Hill on June 4 and conducted more than 500 lobbying meetings with members of Congress and their staff.

More than 1,200 students from some 360 colleges and universities also participated in the lobbying appointments. The meetings provided them with an invaluable opportunity to engage directly in the political process and prepare for future political activism when they return to their campuses.

The number of appointments—407 meetings with House members and meetings with all 100 Senators—marked the most lobbying sessions ever conducted during an AIPAC Policy Conference.

AIPAC citizen-lobbyists hailed from nearly every congressional district in the United States. Their lobbying meetings focused on the threat of Iran's illicit nuclear program, the need to reinforce key principles for Israel-Palestinian peace, and the Jewish state's ongoing need for critical security assistance from the United States.

Activists urged Congress to support the administration's request of \$2.55 billion in security assistance to Israel as part of the fiscal year 2009 budget, and to vote for the overall foreign-aid budget when it reaches the House and Senate floors.

The aid request reflects the first year of a 10-year plan to gradually increase U.S. security assistance to the Jewish state in order to meet increasing regional threats. American aid is essential in helping Israel face a potential nuclear-armed Iran, daily rocket attacks from Hamas terrorists in the Gaza Strip and a rearmed Hizballah in Lebanon.

Delegates also encouraged members in both chambers to vote for resolutions that call on the administration to focus on the urgency of the Iranian nuclear

threat and to impose tougher sanctions on Tehran's economic and petroleum energy sectors.

As Iran is still having some difficulty perfecting its nuclear technology, and has left itself extremely vulnerable to political and economic pressure, international sanctions remain the best nonviolent way to persuade Iran to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

The resolutions, introduced in the House by Reps. Gary Ackerman (D-NY) and Mike Pence (R-IN) and in the Senate

by Sens. Evan Bayh (D-IN) and John Thune (R-SD), urge the president to use existing authority to sanction Iran's Central Bank as well as other international banks and energy companies investing in the country.

They similarly demand that the United States lead an international effort to

increase pressure on Iran by curtailing the Islamic Republic's ability to import refined petroleum products.

Since the lobbying sessions began, the House resolution has already received more than 120 cosponsors, while the Senate version has garnered more than a dozen cosponsors.

In addition to the resolutions, delegates urged members to sign letters that reiterate Israel's right to self-defense, call on the U.S. to stand strongly with Israel at the United Nations and urge the president to press Arab states to demonstrate support for Israeli-Palestinian talks.

The House letter was authored by Reps. Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Roy Blunt (R-MO), Howard Berman (D-CA) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL). The Senate letter was authored by Sens. Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Susan Collins (R-ME).

To date, the House letter has received more than 170 signatures, while the Senate letter has received more than 60. •NER•

**For more information on pending legislation, visit [www.aipac.org](http://www.aipac.org).**



Photo by AIPAC

**AIPAC activists ask Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA) to back legislation that allocates U.S. security aid to Israel.**

## BEYOND THE BASE

POLICY CONFERENCE ATTRACTS A DIVERSE GROUP OF ACTIVISTS

The pro-Israel movement in America is growing more diverse each year. The evidence of this trend was visible at AIPAC Policy Conference 2008.

Forty-two pastors attended the conference, which for the second year in a row featured programming specifically designed for Christian supporters of the Jewish state. At a panel discussion called "Friends of Faith: Evangelical Christians and the Pro-Israel Movement," three experts examined the basis of Christian support for the Jewish state.

Down the hall at the same time, three African-American leaders—Rep. Al Green (D-TX), Rev. Kenneth Flowers and publisher Jake Oliver—participated in a forum called "Emerging Alliance: African-Americans and the Pro-Israel Community." The session focused on how the historic alliance between African Americans and Jews can be ignited around the pro-Israel cause.

Another panel discussion highlighted the growing ties between the Latino and pro-Israel communities.

Nearly 200 rabbis and cantors from across America also attended Policy Conference 2008. They were treated to a special track of programming that included an exclusive lunch meeting and photo-op with Natan Sharansky.

Many of the rabbis shared their feelings about the conference after returning home. "It was awesome and I have not stopped talking about it to colleagues, friends, family and congregants," said Rabbi Norman M. Cohen of Minnetonka, Minnesota.

For the fourth year in a row, the Policy Conference attracted more than 100 pro-Israel activists from Europe, Canada, Australia and South Africa.

These delegates from abroad participated in the International Visitors Program, a track of forums and training sessions specifically designed to help guests from abroad hone their ability to advocate for strong relations between their home countries and Israel. •NER•

# Top Leaders Address AIPAC Policy Conference 2008

THE LARGEST-EVER GATHERING OF THE AMERICAN PRO-ISRAEL COMMUNITY BRINGS TOGETHER AN IMPRESSIVE LINEUP OF TOP U.S. POLICYMAKERS, AS WELL AS THE ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER, TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR THE U.S.-ISRAEL ALLIANCE

## Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)

You know, members of Congress are afforded many honors and, as Speaker of the House, even more so. But I can think of none that surpasses the honor of being able to lead a bipartisan delegation of members of the House of Representatives to extend on behalf of the Congress of the United States and the American people our greetings and congratulations to Israel on the 60th anniversary of the founding of the state of Israel.

That is all to say that, in the Congress of the United States, the aisle that divides Democrats and Republicans disappears when it comes to policy that relates to our support for the security of the state of Israel. For many reasons, it is important for us to support the security of Israel. It is in the national interest of the United States of America to support the security of Israel.

Much fuss has been made about the unanimous resolution—and I'll talk about it in a moment—observing the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel that many of you advocated for, and that was important. It was important that it was unanimous.

But it was also important for us to be able to say that, on the very day that our delegation left for Israel, the House passed the Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Reform Act of 2008.

The bill underscores the U.S. commitment to Israel's security by ensuring that Israel is treated like NATO members, as well as Australia, New Zealand and Japan, for purposes of expediting exports of essential military equipment. This represented real change.

In addition, the bill begins the implementation of the new 10-year Memorandum of Understanding on U.S. security assistance to Israel and requires that Israel's qualitative military edge be empirically assessed on an ongoing basis.

The bill recognizes what I already said, that Israel's national security is a priority for the United States and it recognizes the request



### CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

• EXCERPTS FROM  
KEY SPEECHES AT  
AIPAC POLICY CONFERENCE 2008  
IN WASHINGTON, D.C. •  
JUNE 2-4, 2008

for increased security assistance for Israel.

Of course, one of the subjects of major concern when we were in Israel, as it is in our country, is the subject of Iran. Ensuring the security of Israel and the entire world demands that we do more to convince Iran to give up its nuclear ambitions and cease its support for terrorist groups. Therefore, it is essential that we tighten—and by tighten, I mean tighten—the sanctions as an essential component of this diplomatic effort.

## Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

Our kinship with Israel gives us Americans a visceral understanding and sympathy for how Israel's confidence is tested when it comes to security. I remember all too well the awful days of 2001 and 2002 when Israelis feared that every bus ride, every night out, was another Passover massacre waiting to happen, and I know the anguish and anger that all Israelis feel and that we Americans feel as the terror of random rockets still rain down on innocent people in towns like Sderot and Ashkelon. The thought that our Israeli allies might live in fear and insecurity is simply unacceptable to our nation.

When Israel was besieged by terror in the second intifada, it was the United States that insisted that Israel had a right to

defend itself. When people used to say, and we forget now that they did say it, one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter, it was the United States that said no—the intentional murder of innocent people is wrong everywhere at all times.

When people alleged, as some still do, that America's alliance with Israel was somehow not quite in our national interest, it was President Bush and it was I who said in fact the opposite is true. Our security and our values are enhanced in a world where there is a successful democratic ally called Israel.

Now we hear Iran's rulers say that they do not seek a nuclear weapon—only peaceful nuclear energy. Well then why have they rejected the past offers from the international community for incentives—even cooperation on light water reactors? Why has Iran rejected thus far Russia's offers of uranium enrichment in Russia? Why, as the IAEA's most recent report shows, is Iran continuing to enrich uranium in violation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions? Why, as the IAEA also suggests, are parts of Iran's nuclear program under the control of the Iranian military? And why is Iran continuing to deny international experts full access to its nuclear facilities? Well, ladies and gentlemen, it's just hard to imagine that there are innocent answers to these questions.

I know that there is a serious debate right now both in our country and in Israel about how to address the threat posed by the Iranian regime. This debate though should not be about whether we talk to Iran. That's not the real issue. Diplomacy is not a synonym for talking; true diplomacy means structuring a set of incentives and disincentives to produce change in behavior.

## Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV)

At a time when the president of Iran is once again threatening Israel's existence our words of support for Israel are more important than ever. Just weeks ago, every single United States Senator stood unanimously



Photo by AIPAC



Photo by AIPAC

and passed a resolution celebrating the 60th anniversary of the modern state of Israel.

We sent a clear message to the world that the resolve, the United States' support of Israel, is as strong as it's ever been. This unwavering commitment is not a Democratic or Republican value; it's an American value.

Many of you, my friends here assembled, have visited me in my historic office that I have the honor of serving in as Majority Leader. As you walk through the door just six paces off the Senate floor and look to the left, you'll see a portrait of our 33rd president. It's a great picture. Harry Truman is a hero of mine; he was an outstanding Democrat and a great American. He was one of our most visionary presidents and he, perhaps more than anyone, is responsible for the unwavering friendship between the United States and the state of Israel.

And don't let anyone looking to politicize the issue of Israel tell you otherwise; Democrats and Republicans, all of us together speak with one voice in our commitment to Israel's security and quest for peace. That commitment to Israel has always been honored beyond politics or partisanship and that must not change.

You see, the United States and Israel are linked not just by our long history and shared commitment to a democratic government, but by our common adversaries. Those who threaten Israel and the peace and stability of the region threaten us, as well. And so often when we make tough diplomatic choices to stand against tyranny and extremism we make them together.

Last year, Senator Barack Obama



Photo by AIPAC

introduced a smart, tough divestment plan cosponsored by 33 other Democratic and Republican senators that would place severe costs on Iran for its reckless choices. More senators should join this and other efforts to increase sanctions on Iran. The United States must continue to provide robust military aid to Israel so that Israel can further enhance its qualitative military advantage in the region. I fully support that military aid and the new 10-year plan, and I'll urge my Senate colleagues—all of them, Democrats and Republicans—to do the same.

These steps will send a clear message: America will never permit Israel's existence to be threatened—never.

**Senate Republican Leader  
Mitch McConnell (R-KY)**

I cosponsored a bill that would impose sanctions on Iran and on any nation that supports its nuclear program, and looking ahead, the singular challenge posed by the Iranian regime all but guarantees that future Congresses will have an opportunity to even further strengthen American-Israeli ties.

As many have noted before, both [the United States and Israel] were born in conflict; both were built up through the hard work and pioneering spirit of people who had come from many nations and both have relied in all this on a foundational respect for the elements of a free society—rule of law, free press, freedom of religion and deep respect for individual rights and human dignity.

Indeed, America's kinship with the Jewish people is as old as America itself. Our very first president saw that this land would always be a home away from home for Jews who came here after centuries of fearful isolation.

As early as 1922, Congress had affirmed the central principle of the Balfour Declaration. By 1945, 33-States representing 86 percent of the U.S. population had passed resolutions favoring a Jewish state.



Photo by AIPAC

And two years before Truman officially recognized Israel, the State Department conducted a poll that showed strong support for a Jewish State by a vast majority of Americans.

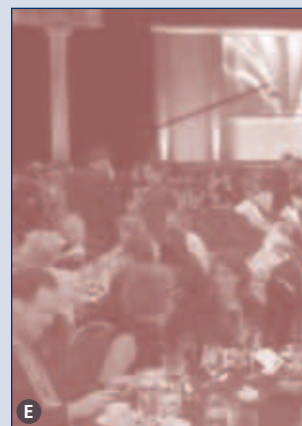
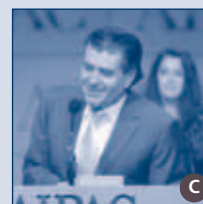
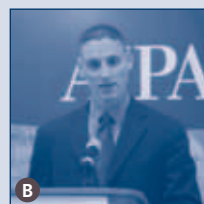
When David Ben-Gurion declared a new Jewish State at midnight Tel Aviv time on May 14, 1948, one thing was clear: Most Americans were very happy about it.

Over the years, that bond has grown stronger, thanks in large part to the extraordinary bipartisan support that Israel has traditionally enjoyed here in Washington. In a town where the two parties seldom agree on much, Israel has always been a notable exception. Beyond our shared values, Americans of all political stripes respect and admire Israel's astonishing achievement in subduing its desert home and preserving freedom and democratic values in the face of constant security threats.

**House Republican Leader  
John Boehner (R-OH)**

I'm especially pleased to be here today and

**SCENES FROM AIPAC POLICY CONFERENCE 2008**



want to say first, thank you. Thank you to all of you and your commitment to Israel and your commitment to the pact that we have in America between the American people and the Israeli people. It's a pact that you continue to support, to foster and to strengthen, and I as one simple American want to say thank you to all of you for your commitment.

Last month we were pleased to celebrate an anniversary with an important friend and ally, the 60th anniversary of the state of Israel. America has no closer ally than Israel.

And since its creation, Israel as you all know has lived under a constant threat of aggression and has stood bravely against the rise of radical Islam. And no nation understands the threat better—the threat of terror and vigilance that's necessary in order to confront it—than the state of Israel. And let me be clear: The



Photo by AIPAC

danger remains and must be confronted with courage, conviction and decisiveness. Two days ago, the president of Iran promised that Israel would disappear, and I don't think the message could be more obvious. Iran is a threat to Israel, and Iran is a threat to the United States.

Our message should be clear and unmistakable: We will not legitimize a leader who has repeatedly threatened the very existence of Israel and the United States.

My friends, the threat of terrorism is real. And the enemies of America and

Israel are the same. The terrorist aim is to create a domestic political environment here in the United States in hopes that it will prompt America to leave the Middle East, and this has been their goal for decades. I go back to the takeover of the revolutionaries in Tehran in 1979, or the bombings of our Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, or what they did in Somalia in 1993, or the Khobar terrorist bombing in Saudi Arabia in 1996, or the East Africa Embassy bombings in 1998, or how about the bombing of the USS Cole off of Yemen in the year 2000? All of this trying to prompt a public opinion in America that America should withdraw, that America should not stand up for our friends and our allies in the Middle East.

Thank you for your commitment to come here, to go to the Hill and to help educate members of Congress about the importance of this relationship. You play a vital role in helping to educate members to the strong relationship that we have and helping to develop the commitment in each of them to helping preserve and build this relationship, a relationship that has lasted some 60 years and a relationship, in my view, that should last forever.

#### Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY)

The United States and Israel have an incredible bond as allies, friends—as partners. We have shared interests; we have shared ideals and these are not just common values. They are our core values: freedom, democracy, human rights, women's rights, a robust civil society, and we stand with Israel because Israel demonstrates that democracy can flourish in the most difficult conditions.

Today I want to lay out three principles that I hope will guide us in all that we do with Israel and why it is important to put that relationship into the broader context of what foreign policy is in the best interest of the United States.

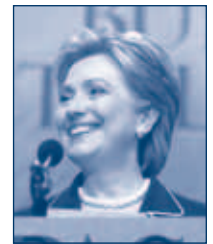


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First, I have a bedrock commitment to Israel's security because Israel's security is critical to our security. When Islamic extremists, including the leaders of nations, proclaim "Death to America; death to Israel," we understand that our two nations are fighting a shared threat, and those of us in this room know this bond is so much more personal than any security agreement or risk assessment.

I am proud to support the \$2.5 billion in security assistance for Israel in the foreign aid bill, and I am committed to making sure that Israel maintains a military edge to meet increasing threats. Part of our commitment to Israel's security is a commitment to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

We need to talk to all sides, but all parties must know we will always stand with Israel in its struggle for peace and security. Israel should know that the United States will never pressure her to make unilateral concessions or to impose a made-in-America solution.

Palestinians will need to do their part by renouncing violence and teaching their children the ways of peace and tolerance.

The second principle is simple one: No nuclear weapons for Iran. Iran is a country whose leaders, whose president,

### SCENES FROM AIPAC POLICY CONFERENCE 2008



**A:** The conference's opening session featured a roundtable of Middle East experts. **B:** Ohio State Rep. Josh Mandel spoke about his efforts to divest state pension funds from companies doing business in Iran. **C:** Entertainment magnate Haim Saban was greeted by 200 AIPAC student activists, who thanked him for his eponymous Saban Leadership Seminars. **D:** Two-hundred students from Christian and Historically Black Colleges and Universities learned how to be better pro-Israel advocates. **E:** Delegates mingle at the Gala Banquet. **F:** Literary critic Leon Wieseltier and human rights activist Natan Sharansky were part of a roundtable discussion on the future of the Jewish people.



F

denies the Holocaust. He defies the international community. His government trains, funds, and arms Hamas and Hizballah terrorists in attacking Israeli civilians. He threatens to destroy Israel. Just this week he said that "Israel is about to die and will soon be erased."

Now my third principle is standing up against hatred and anti-Semitism wherever it is found, and it's not only Israelis and Jews who need to be speaking out against anti-Semitism; it is every fair thinking person who understands that it directly affects you as well.

I have spoken out for years against anti-Semitism in Palestinian schools. I'm appalled still today that Palestinian textbooks reject Israel's right to exist and describe Israel's founding as a catastrophe that is unprecedented in history. That is not education. It is indoctrination. We also know that the Saudis have textbooks describing Jews as wicked and we were all revolted when Iran's president held a conference to deny the Holocaust.

#### **Sen. John McCain (R-AZ)**

My friends, all of you involved in the work of AIPAC have taken up a great and vital cause and a cause set firmly in the American heart.

The threats to Israel's security are large and growing and America's commitment must grow as well. I strongly support the increase in military aid to Israel scheduled to begin in October. I am committed to making certain Israel maintains its qualitative military edge. Israel's enemies are too numerous, its margin of error too small, and our shared interests and values too great for us to follow any other policy.

Tehran's continued pursuit of nuclear weapons poses an unacceptable risk, a danger we cannot allow.

Over a year ago, I proposed applying sanctions to restrict Iran's ability to import refined petroleum products on which it is highly dependent and the time has come for an international campaign to do just that. A severe limit on Iranian imports of gasoline would create immediate pressure on Khamenei and Ahmadinejad to change course and to cease in the pursuit of nuclear weapons. At the same time, we need the support of those in the region who are most concerned about Iran and of our European partners as well. They can help by imposing targeted sanctions that will impose a heavy cost on the regime's leaders, including the denial of visas and freezing of assets. As a further measure to contain and deter Iran, the United States should impose financial sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran, which aids in Iran's terrorism and weapons proliferation. We must apply the full force of law to prevent business dealings with Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps.

We should privatize the sanctions against Iran by launching a worldwide divestment campaign. As more people, businesses, pension funds and financial institutions across the world divest from companies doing business with Iran, the radical elite who run that country will become even more unpopular than they are already.

My friends, as the people of Israel



Photo by AIPAC

know better than most, the safety of free people can never be taken for granted. And in a world full of dangers, Israel and the United States must always stand together.

The state of Israel stands as a singular achievement in many ways and not the least is its achievement as the great democracy of the Middle East. If there are ties between America and Israel that critics of our alliance have never understood, perhaps that's because they do not fully understand the love of liberty and the pursuit of justice. But they should know those ties cannot be broken. We were brought together by shared ideals and by shared adversity. We have been comrades in struggle and trusted partners in the quest for peace. We are the most natural of allies, and like Israel itself, that alliance is forever.

#### **Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL)**

One of the many things that I admire about AIPAC is that you fight for this common cause from the bottom up. The life-blood of AIPAC is here in this room; grassroots activists of all ages, from all parts of the country who come to Washington, year after year, to make your voices heard. Nothing reflects the face of AIPAC more than the 1,200 students who have traveled here to make it clear to the world that the bond between Israel and the United States is rooted in more than our shared national interest; it's rooted in the shared values and shared stories of our people.

Those who threaten Israel threaten us. Israel has always faced these threats on the frontlines, and I will bring to the White House an unshakable commitment to

### **SCENES FROM AIPAC POLICY CONFERENCE 2008**



**G:** Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI) smiles with AIPAC Chairman of the Board Howard Friedman at the Gala Banquet, which nearly half of Congress attended. **H:** Delegates participated in more than 500 lobbying appointments on Capitol Hill. **I:** Signs at AIPAC Policy Conference 2008 highlighted the theme of the event: The U.S.-Israel relationship is "Built to Last." **J:** More than 6,500 pro-Israel activists from all 50 states traveled to the nation's capital for Policy Conference. **K:** In breakout sessions, delegates heard from top lawmakers, Middle East experts and AIPAC staffers. **L:** AIPAC President David Victor inspired conference delegates to be more involved in pro-Israel political activism.



Israel's security. That starts with insuring Israel's qualitative military advantage. I will insure that Israel can defend itself from any threat from Gaza to Tehran. Defense cooperation between the United States and



Photo by AIPAC

Israel is a model of success and it must be deepened. As president, I will implement a memorandum of understanding that provides \$30 billion in assistance to Israel over the next decade, investments to Israel's security that will not be tied to any other nation.

We must isolate Hamas unless and until they renounce terrorism, recognize Israel's right to exist and abide by past agreements. There is no room at the negotiating table for terrorist organizations.

Israel's security is sacrosanct. It is non-negotiable. The Palestinians need a state that is contiguous and cohesive and that allows them to prosper, but any agreement with the Palestinian people must preserve Israel's identity as a Jewish state with secure, recognized, defensible borders. And Jerusalem will remain the capital of Israel, and it must remain undivided.

Now there's no greater threat to Israel or to the peace and the stability of the region than Iran. This audience is made up of both Republicans and Democrats, and the enemies of Israel should have no doubt that regardless of party, Americans stand shoulder to shoulder in our commitment to Israel's security. The danger from Iran is grave; it is real; and my goal will be to eliminate this threat.

We should work with Europe, Japan

and the Gulf States to find every avenue outside the United Nations to isolate the Iranian regime, from cutting off loan guarantees and expanding financial sanctions, to banning the export of refined petroleum to Iran to boycotting firms associated with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, whose Quds forces have rightly been labeled a terrorist organization.

Finally, let there be no doubt, I will always keep the threat of military action on the table to defend our security and our ally, Israel. Do not be confused. Sometimes there are no alternatives to confrontation, but that only makes diplomacy more important. If we must use military force, we are more likely to succeed, and we'll have far greater support at home and abroad, if we have exhausted our diplomatic efforts.

### Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert

Sanctions can be imposed on the export of gasoline to Iran, and they can be imposed on countries which refine gasoline for Iran.

Governments should announce that Iranian businessmen are no longer welcome in their countries and that funds arriving from or channeled to Iran should not be transferred through their banks. Israel and the United States have long understood the acute danger embodied in a nuclear Iran and are working closely in a concerted, coordinated effort to prevent Iran from becoming nuclear. Israel will not tolerate the possibility of a nuclear Iran and neither should any other country in the free world.

Dear friends, on May 21, Israel and Syria simultaneously announced the start

of negotiations for comprehensive peace under the auspices of Turkey, based on the principles of the 1991 Madrid Conference. Syria is currently a threat to regional stability. But if it ultimately makes the choice to have peace relations with Israel for which it will have to disengage from its allies in the axis of evil this will constitute a drastic strategic shift in the entire Middle East.

My obligation as prime minister is to explore every avenue to reach an understanding and I truly believe that now perhaps for the first time ever it is attainable.

President Abbas and I have met many times over the past two years, and the two teams have been meeting on a weekly basis in a serious effort to achieve a historic breakthrough in the course of 2008. The negotiations cover all outstanding issues between us. The agreement, if and when it is reached, will reflect the vision introduced to the world by President Bush in June 2002, and its implementation will be subject to the Road Map, and it is clear that security will always come first.

One of the most fundamental pillars of Israel's national security is its alliance with the United States, and you have dedicated your lives to insuring that not only will this alliance never weaken or fail but that it will grow stronger and deeper. I thank you for giving me this opportunity to address you this evening. When I see all of you here I know that my country is truly blessed. •NER•



Photo by AIPAC

To view full videos and transcripts, visit [www.aipac.org/pc2008](http://www.aipac.org/pc2008).

## SCENES FROM AIPAC POLICY CONFERENCE 2008



to the more than 7,000 activists in the room, nor to the 100,000 AIPAC members around the country. Their intended audience was the overwhelming majority of the American public who sees Israel as one of this nation's closest allies—a public that wants to know if the next president will be Israel's friend.

It wasn't always this way. There hasn't always been an AIPAC conference where aspiring politicians would come to address the pro-Israel electorate in the nation's capital.

If Theodor Herzl walked into a Policy Conference, he would not recognize how far his dream has come. His first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland's municipal casino hall was no star-studded affair. No world leaders showed up. But Herzl, with his background in theater, put on the best show he could. To set the tone, he asked delegates to dress in formal attire. For decoration, a large blue and white flag was draped over the entrance.

Today, Policy Conference looks more like a live television show than a hastily assembled gathering. But we must never take for granted how far the movement has come since its earliest days. Even in America, it was not so long ago that Secretary of State George Marshall told Harry Truman that he would vote *against* him if he recognized the new Jewish state.

Now, our voices are heard, and our opinion matters. Let us press forward with the conviction that the U.S.-Israel alliance is built to last. •NER•

## Student Leaders Recognized

### POLICY MAKERS NOTE IMPRESSIVE TURNOUT AT ANNUAL POLICY CONFERENCE

More than 1,200 students from 363 campuses in all 50 states—including 175 Student Government Association (SGA) presidents and leaders of the College Democrats of America and College Republican National Committee—participated in this year's AIPAC Policy Conference.

The impressive turnout was made possible through a generous grant by the Legacy Heritage Fund.

While the vast majority of student delegates came from within AIPAC's traditional base of support, including many children and grandchildren of AIPAC's community activists, this year's event attracted 200 students from Christian and Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as well as some 200 high school students.

For the fifth straight year, the number of elected SGA presidents also dramatically increased. The SGA presidents represented a wide variety of campuses in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, including 40 from AIPAC Showcase Campuses; 30 from Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Christian Campuses; and 18 from states with limited pro-Israel infrastructure, including West Virginia, Mississippi, Wyoming, North Dakota, Maine, Hawaii,

Montana and Alaska.

A targeted recruitment effort brought 21 SGA presidents from the state of New York. These delegates signed a joint statement in support of the U.S.-Israel relationship and delivered it to their senators during Policy Conference.

In addition to being recognized during several of the plenary sessions—notably by the three presidential candidates, the Speaker of the House and the Israeli prime minister—the elected student leaders attended an interactive forum with Rep. Shelley Berkeley (D-NV), the former student body president of the University of Nevada-Las Vegas; State Rep. Josh Mandel (R-OH), the twice-elected student president of Ohio State University; and State Rep. Bakari Sellers (D-SC), Morehouse College's former campus president.

Many of these elected leaders and others expressed their interest in further strengthening ties with the pro-Israel movement.

"I was inspired by the policy makers we heard and interacted with at Policy Conference," said University of Oklahoma Student Government President Kenah Nyanat. "AIPAC has shown student leaders how they can impact the U.S.-Israel relationship through the American political process." •NER•



Photo by AIPAC  
AIPAC student activists find time to network with their peers at Policy Conference 2008.

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