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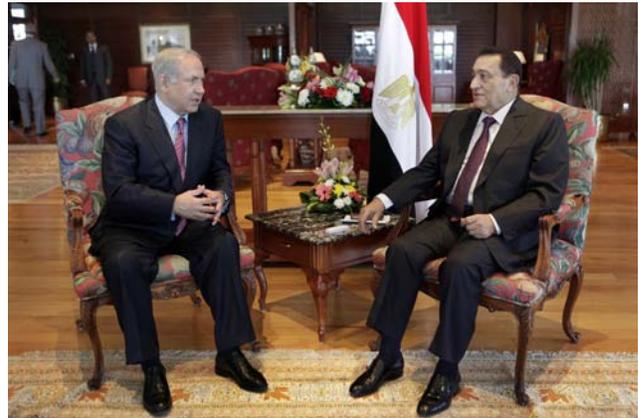
May 14, 2009

Obama-Netanyahu Meeting Important Opportunity to Counter Iran, Advance Israeli-Arab Peace Efforts

With Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Obama slated to meet at the White House on Monday, Netanyahu has articulated a vision for American, Arab, and Israeli cooperation to prevent a nuclear Iran and to advance Israeli-Palestinian peace talks and wider Israeli-Arab peace efforts. To achieve these common goals, the United States should adhere to important principles that have guided past Israeli-Arab negotiations. Arab states will also need to play a constructive role in the process by working to counter Iran, beginning to normalize ties with Israel, rejecting terrorism and supporting Palestinians committed to peace.

The United States and Israel have pledged to work closely to prevent a nuclear Iran and advance Israeli-Arab peace efforts.

- The White House meeting between Obama and Netanyahu will be their first meeting as president and prime minister and their third overall.
- Netanyahu said he looks forward to working closely with Obama, saying in a recent speech, “I have met President Obama. I respect him, and I look forward to seeing him in Washington. We plan to continue our common quest for security, for prosperity, and for peace.”
- In congratulating Netanyahu after he formed his government in April, Obama said he “looked forward to working closely with Prime Minister Netanyahu and his government to address issues of mutual concern, including Iran and Arab-Israeli peace.”
- Netanyahu believes the opposition of the United States, Israel and the Arab states to a nuclear-armed Iran could serve as a good starting point for cooperation between Israel and her neighbors. It could also help create the conditions necessary to support successful Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and wider Israeli-Arab peace efforts.
- The prime minister’s trip to Washington follows his meetings with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordanian King Abdullah. In Cairo, Netanyahu reiterated his desire to resume peace talks with the Palestinians, saying, “We would like to resume as soon as possible the peace talks between us and the Palestinians, and I hope they will be renewed in the coming weeks.”



During his meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel wants to resume talks with the Palestinians “as soon as possible.”

- Netanyahu has called for a three-pronged track toward peace between Israel and the Palestinians that would focus on political, security and economic issues.
- Netanyahu pledged support for the efforts of U.S. Gen. Keith Dayton and Jordan to train Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces. He also has urged cooperation with the PA to improve the Palestinian economy, “not as a substitute for political negotiations, but as a boost to them.”

To heighten prospects for Israeli-Palestinian peace, the United States should adhere to principles that have proved successful in previous talks.

- The parties themselves must be engaged in direct, bilateral negotiations. Attempts to impose solutions have never worked.
- The United States and Israel operate most effectively when they work closely and privately together, especially on areas of disagreement.
- The United States needs to remain both a trusted mediator and a devoted friend to Israel, which feels more secure in taking risks for peace when strongly backed by the United States.
- The United States should insist on an absolute Palestinian commitment to end violence and terror and to build the institutions necessary for a viable Palestinian state living side-by-side in peace with the Jewish state of Israel.

Arab states need to accept Israel’s right to exist and reject terrorism and extremism to bolster peace efforts.

- To facilitate peace efforts between Palestinians and Israelis, Arab states must begin to prepare their own people for peace with Israel by ending their decades-old boycott of Israel and opening diplomatic and economic ties with Israel.
- The Arab states also need to concretize their public support for the government of Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas. This means providing both tangible financial support to help bolster the Palestinian economy and political backing for the tough compromises necessary to reach an agreement with Israel.
- The Abbas-led PA also will need strong support from the Arab states to implement its responsibilities, such as fighting terrorism and building institutions committed to peace with Israel.
- Arab leaders, who routinely warn privately of the danger of a nuclear-armed Iran, need to openly back international efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability.
- Countering Iran and rising extremism in the region is also important in fostering the atmosphere necessary for successful Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace efforts.