

# MEMO

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May 14, 2018

## **Moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem: A Historic Moment**

Today the United States relocated its embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This historic move implements the bipartisan Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 and gives meaning to America's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The move of the embassy both recognizes the Jewish state's historic connection to Jerusalem and provides an example for other nations.

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### **The opening of the U.S. embassy in Jerusalem gives effect to America's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.**

- In December 2017, President Trump officially recognized Jerusalem as Israel capital. "Today we finally acknowledge the obvious: that Jerusalem is Israel's capital. This is nothing more or less than a recognition of reality," the president said.
- In 1995, Congress overwhelmingly passed the bipartisan Jerusalem Embassy Act, which called for relocating the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.
- Congress has repeatedly reaffirmed the Jerusalem Embassy Act. Most recently, the Senate in June 2017 overwhelmingly adopted S.Res. 176, which "reaffirms the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995...and calls upon the President and all United States officials to abide by its provisions."

### **Jerusalem has long been the capital of Israel and the Jewish people.**

- Since King David made Jerusalem the capital of Israel some 3,000 years ago, the city has served as the spiritual capital of the Jewish people. Jerusalem is the location of the Temple Mount—Judaism's most sacred site. The Western Wall (Kotel) is the last remaining vestige of the Temple's outer walls.
- After the re-establishment of the State of Israel, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion declared Jerusalem as Israel's capital in 1949.
- Since 1950, Israel has located its legislature, Supreme Court, and the bulk of its government ministries in Jerusalem. Since Jerusalem's reunification in 1967, Israel has ensured access to the holy sites and extended the freedom to worship to members of all religions.

### **The United States remains committed to peace.**

- The United States remains committed to a peace agreement that results in two states for two people should that be what the parties decide.
  - It is the policy of the U.S. government that the status of Jerusalem, and its ultimate boundaries, must be resolved through direct negotiations between the parties. The location of the embassy in no way precludes this goal.
  - Recognition and the opening of the embassy are important rejections of those in the international community, like UNESCO, who promote the anti-Semitic canard that denies the 3,000-year, continuous Jewish connection to its holiest city, Jerusalem.
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