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Obama and Netanyahu Vow to Strengthen U.S.-Israel Ties

On Nov. 9 at the White House, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with President Barack Obama to discuss increased security cooperation between their two countries. The meeting focused on expediting talks on a new 10-year U.S. security assistance package to Israel. The current memorandum of understanding, which is set to expire in 2017, provides the Israel Defense Forces with \$3.1 billion annually. An American team will travel to Israel in early December to continue the negotiations, which are expected to last for several months. While sitting next to President Obama, Prime Minister Netanyahu expressed "... the appreciation of the people of Israel to you for your efforts...and what you're engaging in right now—how to bolster Israel's security, how to maintain Israel's qualitative military edge so that Israel can, as you've often said, defend itself, by itself, against any threat." The president and prime minister both condemned the recent wave of Palestinian violence in Israel and emphasized the need for a peace agreement. "We'll never give up our hope for peace," concurred Netanyahu. "And I remain committed to a vision of peace of two states for two peoples, a demilitarized Palestinian state that recognizes the Jewish state."