

The week ending November 21, 2014

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

U.S. Leaders Condemn Jerusalem Synagogue Attack

The Obama Administration and congressional leaders strongly condemned an attack on a Jerusalem synagogue that killed five Israelis and wounded several others. President Barack Obama released a statement condemning the attack and stating there is no justification for the murder of innocent lives. "I strongly condemn today's terrorist attack on worshipers at a synagogue in Jerusalem, which killed four innocent people, including U.S. citizens Aryeh Kupinsky, Cary William Levine, and Mosheh Twersky, and injured several more," said Mr. Obama. "There is and can be no justification for such attacks against innocent civilians. The thoughts and prayers of the American people are with the victims and families of all those who were killed and injured in this horrific attack and in other recent violence. At this sensitive moment in Jerusalem, it is all the more important for Israeli and Palestinian leaders and ordinary citizens to work cooperatively together to lower tensions, reject violence, and seek a path forward towards peace." Secretary of State John Kerry also condemned the attack and called on the Palestinian leadership to take the necessary steps to end incitement to violence. "Innocent people who had come to worship died in the sanctuary of a synagogue," said Kerry. "They were hatcheted, hacked and murdered in that holy place in an act of pure terror and senseless brutality and murder. I call on Palestinians at every single level of leadership to condemn this in the most powerful terms. This violence has no place anywhere, particularly after the discussion that we just had the other day in Amman."

[Click here for statements from members of Congress.](#)

IRAN

Watchdog: Iran still stalling as nuclear deal deadline looms

The head of the U.N. nuclear agency said on Thursday that Iran had again failed to provide explanations about suspected atomic bomb research, as a deadline looms for a comprehensive deal between Iran and six world powers to end the long-running controversy, reported [Reuters](#). The deal is intended to set limits on Iran's nuclear program in return for an end to international sanctions. As one of the conditions, Western officials say Iran must stop stonewalling the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) 12-year-old investigation into allegations that Iran may have worked on designing an atomic bomb. But IAEA director general Yukiya Amano made clear the agency was still far from satisfied. "Iran has not provided any explanations that enable the agency to clarify the outstanding practical measures," he told a meeting of the U.N. agency's 35-nation board of governors. He was referring to two steps that Iran had agreed to carry out by late August, by providing information to the IAEA concerning allegations of explosives tests and other activity that could be used to develop nuclear

bombs. "I call upon Iran to increase its cooperation with the agency and to provide timely access to all relevant information, documentation, sites, material and personnel," Amano said.

U.S. - ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

Mississippi Governor Deems Recent Israel Trip a Success

Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant hails his recent business development mission in Israel as his best trade trip as governor. "There's no doubt about that," said Bryant. "This is the best opportunity for Mississippi since we began our relationship with Japan." Bryant took part in Israel's Third International Conference on Homeland Security and was the only U.S. governor to speak at the event. In his speech, Bryant stressed the close ties and warm feelings between Mississippi and Israel. During his trip to the Holy Land, Bryant was able to sit down with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for 45 minutes. The two conversed over Ingalls shipbuilding and General Atomics' electromagnetic rail-gun missile defense system. "The prime minister said, 'Why haven't I been told about this defense system before?'" Bryant said. The Mississippi delegation met with representatives from over 40 Israeli companies, in addition to defense and government officials. Two business leaders on the trip acquired large orders from Israeli companies. Bryant pointed out that the Israeli entrepreneurs reminded him of Southerners. This April, Bryant will continue to strengthen ties with Israel through the Israel-Mississippi Business Summit. Bryant said that Israel has burgeoning manufacturing and high-tech sectors, but needs to develop trade infrastructure in the United States.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Brace yourself, Israel: Sarah Silverman is coming

Sarah Silverman will be visiting Israel in December as a special guest at the Jerusalem Jewish Film Festival, Israeli media reported on Friday. According to the Yedioth Aharonoth daily, the Jewish-American comedienne will attend a gala screening of her stand-up comedy show "Sarah Silverman: We Are Miracles" (HBO) for which she received an Emmy Award earlier this year. According to [Haaretz](#), after the screening, Silverman will talk to the audience and be awarded a prize by the festival for her achievements in comedy, the report said. The 16th annual Jerusalem Jewish Film Festival runs from December 16 to 23, presenting feature films, documentaries, shorts, animated and avant-garde films on Jewish themes and those relating to Israel and the Diaspora, according to the website of the Jerusalem Cinematheque, home to the event. Silverman, an acclaimed Los Angeles comedienne, is known for flaunting her Jewish identity and depthless chutzpah. One of her sisters is a Reform rabbi living in Jerusalem. The last publicized time Silverman visited Israel was in 2011, when she attended the Conference of the President of Israel and performed in Tel Aviv.