



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending July 10, 2015

IRAN

U.S. Could Walk Away from Iran Talks, Kerry Warns

Secretary of State John F. Kerry said Thursday that the United States and its negotiating partners “will not rush, and we will not be rushed” into finalizing a nuclear deal with Iran, but warned they will abandon talks soon if Iran doesn’t make the “tough decisions” needed for an agreement. “This is not open-ended,” Kerry said after walking on crutches to a podium outside the Coburg Palace hotel here where the talks are being held, reports [The Washington Post](#). “President Obama made it very clear to me last night, we can’t wait forever for the decision to be made,” Kerry said. “We know that. If the tough decisions don’t get made, we are absolutely prepared to call an end to this process.” But Kerry didn’t specify just how much longer he is willing to remain in Vienna in search of a deal that would place curbs on Iran’s nuclear program in return for sanctions relief. Kerry spoke at the end of a day of back-to-back negotiations and just hours before the White House must submit a finalized deal to Congress if it is to avoid an extended review by lawmakers. Sending the text to Capitol Hill is a complicated, time-consuming process, involving not just submitting copies of the agreement, but a written explanation of how Iran will be blocked from pursuing a path to nuclear weapons. “We are not going to sit at the negotiating table forever,” said Kerry. “We also recognize that we shouldn’t get up and leave simply because the clock strikes midnight.” If talks continue beyond Friday, negotiators will also have to formally extend an interim agreement reached in November 2013 or let it expire.

[Click here to read statements from members of Congress on the requirements for a good deal.](#)

Top U.S. Officials: Maintain Pressure on Iran's Military Capabilities

The United States’ top military officials voiced opposition to lifting the U.N. arms embargo and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) development ban on Iran during a July 7 Senate Armed Services Committee hearing. Following an exchange with Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) on Iran’s “malign interference” in the region, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey stated, “Under no circumstances should we relieve pressure on Iran relative to ballistic missile capabilities and arms trafficking.” Also at the hearing, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter stressed the need to stop Iran’s ICBM program and to prevent the Iranians from obtaining a nuclear weapon. “We want them [the Iranians] to continue to be isolated as a military,” Carter said. “Whatever happens as far as an agreement over the nuclear program with respect to Iran is concerned, I think we—and certainly I feel this—have a clear duty in the Department of Defense, first of all, to defend our friends and allies... especially Israel.” After the hearing, Sen. Ayotte added, “I hope the White House and the administration’s negotiators in Vienna listen to the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who oppose lifting the arms embargo against Iran, as well as the restrictions on their ballistic missile program.

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

United States Stands with Israel at the U.N. Human Rights Council

The United States stood firm as the only country to support Israel and oppose a one-sided United Nations Human Rights Council resolution on last summer's conflict in Gaza. The resolution comes in the wake of a report by the Council's Commission of Inquiry into the conflict that accused Israel of possible war crimes violations. In the final vote, 41 out of the 47 members of the Council voted in favor of the resolution. Ethiopia, India, Paraguay, the Republic of Macedonia and Kenya abstained from the vote. "We are troubled that this current resolution focuses exclusively on alleged Israeli violations, without any expressed reference to Palestinian violations," said U.S. Ambassador to the Council Geneva Keith Harper in a statement explaining the American vote. "We remain greatly troubled by this Council's stand-alone agenda item directed against Israel, under which this resolution is being considered. None of the world's worst human rights violators have their own stand-alone agenda item in this Council. Only Israel receives such treatment." In his statement, Harper stressed that the only viable path to peace between the Israelis and Palestinians is through "actions that help move the parties toward a two-state solution" rather than a one-sided resolution. "The only way ultimately to resolve this tragic conflict is a comprehensive agreement that creates two states living side by side in security and peace. The status quo is not sustainable for either the Palestinians or Israelis," said Harper.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Snapchat takes Tel Aviv, sparks anti-Israel outrage

When Snapchat announced that Tel Aviv would be Tuesday's featured 'live story' on its photo-sharing platform, cheers of joy and excitement were heard amongst Tel Aviv millennials. With its live story feature, Snapchat gives users insight into the daily happenings of users in a selected number of cities worldwide, [The Jerusalem Post](#) reports. It curates a stream of user-submitted photo or video 'snaps' and aggregates them into one "live-story"—a video-collage of chosen snaps—available for viewing for a period of 24 hours by upwards of 100 million Snapchat users. The final story was just over three minutes long, featuring everything from the looming Azrieli towers, to the bustling-hustle of Shuk Hacarmel, the roller-coasters of Luna Park, youths enthusiastically singing "Tel Aviv ya habibi Tel Aviv," a concert at Tel Aviv's port come nightfall, and even, a bride-and-groom walking down the aisle. Yet while Snapchat was pulling stories for its live-feed, anti-Israel sentiment spread in the Twitter-sphere, with the hashtags #TelAviv and #StopTelAvivLive trending, calling Israel a "fake land," an "occupation," "lacking humanity." Palestinian supporters uploaded photos of violence in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, created memes in which the Israeli flag was replaced by a Palestinian one on Snapchat, compared Israel to Nazi Germany, and posed the question of "how would you feel?" to the U.S., Australia, Canada, and Germany if an "Israeli occupation" were to take control of their land.