



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending May 1, 2015

U. S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

AIPAC Commends House Armed Services Committee for Authorizing U.S.-Israel Missile Defense Funds

AIPAC praises the House Armed Services Committee for including substantial U.S.-Israel cooperative missile defense funding in the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that it approved today. AIPAC expresses appreciation to Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-TX) and Ranking Democrat Adam Smith (D-WA) for their leadership in providing funds totaling \$474 million, and to other members of the committee who worked to support these critical programs. The funds will help Israel defend its citizens against rocket and missile threats, while also helping advance the capabilities of America's armed forces.

The bill authorizes procurement funds of \$41.4 million for the Iron Dome rocket defense system and \$165 million for the David's Sling and Arrow-3 missile defense programs. The bill also includes \$267.6 million in research and development (R&D) funding for U.S.-Israel cooperative missile and rocket defense programs.

In a new development, the committee unanimously accepted a bipartisan proposal by Reps. Doug Lamborn (R-CO) and Gwen Graham (D-FL) authorizing R&D funding to develop an anti-tunneling defense system that could be used to protect Israel and U.S. forces from terrorist attacks.

AIPAC urges the full House and Senate to include these vital funds in the final versions of the Fiscal Year 2016 defense authorization and appropriations bills.

HEZBOLLAH

State Department Designates Three Hezbollah Operatives as Terrorists

On April 28, the State Department deemed Hezbollah operatives Meliad Farah, Hassan el-Hajj Hassan, and Hussein Atris as specially designated global terrorists. Two of the terrorists, Farah and Hassan, were identified as top suspects in the July 2012 bus bombing at the Burgas International Airport parking lot in Bulgaria. The bombing, perpetrated by designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) Hezbollah, killed five Israeli tourists and a Bulgarian citizen. The other, Atris, was linked to a terror warning for a prospective attack in Bangkok, Thailand. Under Executive Order 13324, which pursues terrorists and supporters of terrorism, the three operatives are prohibited from receiving material goods from U.S. citizens and prevented from possessing assets in the United States. "The consequences of these designations include a prohibition against U.S. persons engaging in transactions with Farah, Hassan, and Atris; and the freezing of all property and interests of Farah, Hassan, and Atris that are in the United States, or come within the United States or the possession or control of U.S. persons," said the State Department in a press release.

IRAN

Iran's Zarif Says Congress Can't Stop Obama

If Iran strikes a deal with the West, all sanctions will be lifted very quickly and there's nothing the U.S. Congress can do to stop it, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif told a New York audience Wednesday. According to [Bloomberg View](#), in a set of blustery and self-righteous remarks, Iran's top diplomat assured the crowd at New York University that President Barack Obama would be compelled to stop enforcing sanctions only days after any nuclear agreement was signed and would have to figure out how to lift congressional sanctions on Iran within weeks, no matter what Congress has to say about it. He also said that any future president, even a Republican, would be compelled to stick that agreement. Zarif also took several shots at the U.S. Senate, just as it debated amendments to a bill designed to slow the lifting of sanctions against Iran and give Congress an oversight role on the deal. "As a foreign government, I only deal with the U.S. government. I do not deal with Congress," Zarif said. "The responsibility of bringing that into line falls on the shoulders of the president of the United States. That's the person with whom we are making an agreement." Zarif also insisted that Obama would not be able to "snap back" sanctions after they are lifted, as the White House has repeatedly claimed. When asked about the imprisonment of Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian at a Tehran prison, Zarif said Rezaian will have to defend himself in court against serious charges. He added that many Iranians are imprisoned abroad, but Rezaian is better known because "the Washington Post has a much better publicity campaign."

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israel's aid team to Nepal larger than any other country's

Israel's aid team to the earthquake-battered Himalayan nation of Nepal is the largest in manpower of any international aid mission, reports [The Times of Israel](#). Over 250 doctors and rescue personnel were part of an IDF delegation that landed Tuesday in the Nepalese capital, Kathmandu, in the wake of Saturday's magnitude-7.8 earthquake that devastated large swaths of the mountainous country, killing at least 5,000 and leaving some 8,000 wounded and tens of thousands seeking shelter and food. The Israeli group set up a field hospital with 60 beds that began operations on Wednesday in coordination with the local army hospital. Nepal's Prime Minister Sushil Koirala and the Nepalese Army's chief of staff visited the field hospital to attend its opening ceremony. Israel's aid convoy to the quake-stricken nation is the largest ever sent by the IDF overseas. According to figures reported by CNN, Israel's total official aid delegation, not counting several private aid groups, numbers 260 people, more than all the other aid efforts examined by CNN combined. Israel also leads in its efforts to rescue its stranded countrymen. Some 2,000 Israelis were in Nepal when the quake struck Saturday. The vast majority have been rescued, with the remaining number estimated in the dozens and just one Israeli unaccounted for. Four planes were sent to airlift Israelis out, along with helicopters and jeeps rented for the effort, while a combination of IDF, insurance company-sponsored rescue teams and various volunteer groups helped reach nearly all the Israelis stranded in remote parts of the mountainous country.