



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending November 13, 2015

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

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. Prior to the meeting, President Obama said, “A lot of our time will be spent on a memorandum of understanding that we can potentially negotiate. It will be expiring in a couple of years, but we want to get a head start on that to make sure that both the United States and Israel can plan effectively for our defense needs going forward.” 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. “I want to be very clear that we condemn, in the strongest terms, Palestinian violence against innocent Israeli citizens. And I want to repeat, once again, it is my strong belief that Israel has not just the right, but the obligation to protect itself,” Obama said. He also stated his desire to see peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. “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.”

AIPAC Statement: Senate Stands with Israel against Palestinian Incitement and Terror Attacks

AIPAC commends the U.S. Senate for adopting by unanimous consent a bipartisan resolution standing with Israel and condemning the recent wave of Palestinian terror attacks. The resolution was introduced by Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) with 68 cosponsors. The resolution notes that Israel has recently “been subjected to an alarming wave of terrorism directed against innocent civilians” and that Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas “has helped to fuel the current violence” by making false accusations against Israel. Characterizing these statements by President Abbas “as part of a pattern of incitement among Palestinian leaders,” the resolution calls on him “to stop all incitement by Palestinian officials and by Palestinian media, to strongly and unequivocally demand an end to the violence and to take all steps necessary to halt these attacks.” It also encourages President Abbas to continue strengthening and maintaining security cooperation with Israel. The resolution further “supports Israel’s right to self-defense and rejects any suggestion of the moral equivalence of Israeli security personnel protecting its citizens from senseless violence.” Finally, it calls on all

parties to return to the negotiating table immediately and without preconditions. Last week, the House of Representatives also passed a resolution in solidarity with Israel against Palestinian terror.

[Please take a moment to thank members of Congress for standing with Israel and condemning Palestinian violence and incitement.](#)

Members of Congress Oppose New EU Guidelines on Labeling Israeli Products

U.S. lawmakers from both parties are opposed to new guidelines calling on European Union (EU) member states to require Israeli goods produced over the green line—including in East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights—to be labeled as such when marketed in the EU. On Nov. 9, a bipartisan group of 36 senators sent a letter to European Commission Vice President Federica Mogherini condemning the new labeling guidelines which were adopted by the European Commission on Nov. 11. The letter, authored by Sens. Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), called the new procedure “unwarranted, dangerous, and damaging.” “As allies, elected representatives of the American people, and strong supporters of Israel, we urge you not to implement this labeling policy, which appears intended to discourage Europeans from purchasing these products and promote a de-facto boycott of Israel, a key ally and the only true democracy in the Middle East,” wrote the senators. On Nov. 10, 36 members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to Vice President Mogherini arguing that the new guidelines support the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel. The letter, led by Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO), states that the “policy of labeling Israeli good will not be helpful in bringing peace to the region.” It is our belief that the BDS movement and its effort to smear Israel are connected with the recent rise in acts of anti-Semitism,” the representatives wrote. “We believe it would be ill-advised to endorse a policy that likewise singles out Israel and holds it to different standards than any other country. What’s more, such policies seem extremely ill-fitted and discriminatory at a time when Israeli citizens are under daily attacks, stemming from the malign incitement of the Palestinian leadership.”

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

London mayor Boris Johnson has tech fun in Tel Aviv

Officially, London Mayor Boris Johnson is in Israel on a trade mission to boost business and technology partnerships. But he’s also having a ton of fun, reports [Israel21c](#). “Both London and Tel Aviv share the values of innovation and tolerance, and it is no surprise that so many tech startups choose Tel Aviv as their home. We look forward to working together to enhance both of our tech communities,” Johnson said. The London mayor was accompanied by 15 London tech firm representatives on his three-day tour here, and got to ring the opening bell at the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange. “London is the natural tech partner for Israeli firms looking to expand,” Johnson declared. “With access to a world-class talent pool and a booming digital economy, it is no surprise that Israeli tech companies are making London their home and choosing the London Stock Exchange as their international market for expansion.” Johnson met with former president Shimon Peres and with current President Reuven Rivlin, laid a wreath at Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem and also planned to visit Ramallah before heading back to London. This isn’t Johnson’s first visit to Tel Aviv; his last visit was around 10 years ago.