



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending June 17, 2016

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

AIPAC Statement: House Bolsters U.S. Support for Vital Israel Defense Programs

AIPAC commends the U.S. House of Representatives for significantly bolstering its support of U.S.-Israel missile defense cooperation in the fiscal 2017 defense appropriations bill. The House appropriated \$635.7 million for U.S.-Israel missile defense programs, which will help Israel defend its citizens against rocket and missile threats, and contribute to America's missile defense programs.

The bill specifically includes:

- \$268.7 million in research and development funding for U.S.-Israel cooperative missile and rocket defense programs;
- \$25 million in research and development funding for U.S.-Israel directed energy activities, such as laser technologies, to combat missiles and rockets;
- \$72 million for procurement of the Iron Dome rocket defense system;
- \$150 million for procurement of the David's Sling missile defense system; and
- \$120 million for procurement of the Arrow-3 missile defense system.

The measure provides for a significant portion of these procurement funds to be spent in the United States. In addition, the House included \$42.7 million for U.S.-Israel anti-tunnel cooperation to continue developing technologies for dealing with the complex challenge of locating, mapping and destroying terrorist tunnel networks.

AIPAC applauds the leadership of House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY) and Ranking Member Nita Lowey (D-NY) and House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ) and Ranking Member Peter Visclosky (D-IN) who ensured that these critical programs were included in the legislation. As Israel faces dramatically rising security challenges, AIPAC urges inclusion of these vital funds in the final versions of the Fiscal Year 2017 defense authorization and appropriations bills.

Israeli Leaders Voice Support for United States Following Orlando Massacre

Israeli leaders expressed their "deepest condolences" to the United States in the wake of a massive shooting attack—the deadliest in American history—at a gay nightclub in Orlando that claimed 50 lives and injured 53 others. "On behalf of the people and government of Israel, I extend our deepest condolences to the American people following last night's horrific attack on the LGBT community in Orlando. Israel stands shoulder to shoulder with the United States at this moment of tragic loss," said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a statement. "We send our heartfelt sympathies to the families of the victims and wish a full and speedy recovery to the wounded." In a message to President Barack Obama, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin

stated that “Israel stands with America in the fight against hatred” and called the attack “cowardly and abhorrent.” Leader of the Opposition Isaac Herzog also expressed his condolences for the “horrible massacre.” “The forces of hatred, violence and murder, as manifested in this heinous terror attack, must be fought against with all our might,” said Herzog. “Our two nations will continue to do so in close cooperation, based on our deep friendship, and shared values.” In solidarity with the victims of the attack, Tel Aviv City Hall was lit up depicting both the American and LGBT community’s flags.

United States Denounces Anti-Israel Bias at U.N. Human Rights Council

On June 13, the United States spoke out against the recurring, “stand-alone” Israel agenda item at the United Nations Human Rights Council’s (UNHRC) sessions. In a statement commemorating the 10th anniversary of the UNHRC, the United States emphasized that the unfair treatment of Israel “undermines” the council’s work. “As we have said many times before, we also believe that the existence of a stand-alone agenda item on the State of Israel – the only country to have such an item – reflects a bias in the Council’s work that undermines its credibility,” wrote Ambassador Keith Harper—the U.S. representative to the UNHRC. “The item should be removed.”

ISRAEL AND THE WORLD

Israel to Head a U.N. Permanent Committee in Historic First

On June 13, Israel was elected for the first time in U.N. history to chair a permanent committee at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Israel’s Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon will head the UNGA’s Sixth Committee, which deals with complex legal issues such as international rule of law and international terrorism. “This is a historic achievement for the State of Israel,” said Danon. “We broke the glass ceiling.” Israeli diplomats have headed less prominent committees at the U.N., but never one of the UNGA’s six main committees. “Israel is a world leader in international law...We are pleased to have the opportunity to share our knowledge with the countries of the world.” Congratulating Danon on his election, U.S. Ambassador David Pressman stated that “bias” against Israel needs to change at the United Nations. “The United States congratulates Ambassador Danny Danon on his election to be Chair of the Sixth Committee, and we look forward to a very productive Sixth Committee under his leadership,” said Pressman. “For any other country in these United Nations, today’s election would have been an unremarkable affair. But Israel is rarely treated like any other country here.” Recently, Israel has been subject to increasing attacks at various U.N. bodies. In the past year, the UNGA passed 20 resolutions singling out and criticizing Israel—more than the total number of resolutions naming any other country in the world combined. “We need a United Nations that includes Israel, that brings Israel closer, not one that systematically pushes Israel away,” said Pressman. “Israel has shown, time and time again, that it has much to contribute to the international community, to the benefit of the United Nations and of the world. The Sixth Committee’s work is critical to the progressive development of public international law. We look forward to working with the Sixth Committee under the leadership of the Israeli Permanent Representative, and are confident that Israel’s Permanent Representative, like any other chairman of this committee, will serve with the utmost objectivity and commitment to international law and norms.”