



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending September 16, 2016

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

AIPAC Statement on New U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding

AIPAC applauds the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) announced September 13, 2016 between the United States and Israel which, subject to annual congressional approval, will provide \$38 billion in U.S. security assistance to Israel over the next 10 years. This historic MOU will also incorporate joint missile defense funding, which will provide Israel a stable planning environment to counter this mounting threat. This MOU represents the largest U.S. aid package ever.

We commend President Obama and his administration for forging this landmark agreement. It demonstrates America's strong and unwavering commitment to Israel. We also commend the bipartisan majorities of the House and Senate who have urged the administration to come forward with a dramatic increase in U.S. support for the Jewish state, and we look forward to working with Congress to ensure the full amount is funded.

The United States has long defined Israel's survival and security as a key national security interest. In an increasingly uncertain Middle East, Israel is the one stable democratic ally upon which America can depend. U.S. security assistance is critical for helping the Jewish state defend itself, by itself. With these funds, Israel will be able to modernize and better equip its armed forces. And this MOU will send a strong message of deterrence to America's and Israel's regional adversaries that these two allies stand together amid increased instability and growing chaos in the Middle East.

In 1998, the United States and Israel signed their first 10-year MOU to increase security assistance to Israel while phasing out economic aid. Under that agreement, the United States committed to providing Israel \$21.3 billion in security assistance. In 2007, America committed to provide \$30 billion under the current 10-year MOU, which expires in 2018.

Members of Congress Praise New U.S.-Israel MOU

On Sept. 14, the United States and Israel [signed](#) a new, historic 10-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which sets funding levels for U.S. security assistance to Israel for Fiscal Years 2019-2028. The agreement pledges a total of \$38 billion in aid to Israel—\$33 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and \$5 billion in joint missile defense funding—over a 10 year period. Members of Congress from both parties have praised the new agreement. House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) [said](#) that the MOU “reasserts our nation’s robust commitment to Israel’s security and furthers the pursuit of our common interests.” House Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations Chairwoman Kay Granger (R-TX) [called](#) the U.S.-Israel aid package “historic.”

[Click here to read more statements from Members of Congress praising the new MOU](#)

House Advances Two U.S.-Israel Cyber Bills

On Sept. 13, the House Homeland Security Committee advanced two bills aimed at deepening cyber cooperation between the United States and Israel. The [United States-Israel Advanced Research Partnership Act of 2016](#), introduced by Chairman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Cybersecurity John Ratcliffe (R-TX), amends previous legislation to extend U.S.-Israel homeland security research and antiterrorism programs to include cybersecurity. The bill would foster cooperation between the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Israeli Ministry of Public Security to [develop solutions](#) to the growing challenges in cybersecurity. The second bill, the [United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2016](#), introduced by Rep. James Langevin (D-RI), proposes a cybersecurity grant program at the Department of Homeland Security to promote joint U.S.-Israel R&D projects. The criteria for grants will be [determined jointly](#) by the Secretary of Homeland Security and an advisory panel comprised of members from previous successful U.S.-Israel partnerships, such as the Binational Industrial Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation. The two bills were inspired by a trip Reps. Ratcliffe and Langevin took to Israel earlier this year. According to Rep. Ratcliffe, the [advancement](#) takes, “us one step closer toward establishing new levels of cybersecurity collaboration with our strongest and most trusted ally in the Middle East.”

House Panel Explores Strengthening U.S.-Israel Energy Cooperation

The House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa and the House Science, Space and Technology Subcommittee on Energy held a joint [hearing](#) last week highlighting U.S.-Israel energy cooperation. Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs at the Department of State Amos Hochstein, and Assistant Secretary for International Affairs at the Department of Energy, Jonathan Elkind, testified at the hearing. Elkind emphasized the importance of the U.S.-Israel energy relationship, highlighting a number of collaborative mechanisms between the countries, specifically the new Memorandum of Understanding between DOE and Israel, the robust U.S.-Israel Energy Dialogue and the Binational Industrial Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation’s Energy arm that facilitates private sector collaboration between the countries in the pursuit of new energy technologies. “Our most robust relationship in the eastern Mediterranean region is with Israel and its Ministry of National Infrastructure, Energy, and Water Resources (MIEW), an important friend and ally to the United States,” Elkind stressed. Amos Hochstein, meanwhile, highlighted the tremendous opportunity inherent to Israel’s natural gas finds as a tool for regional diplomacy, and discussed the broader role of Eastern Mediterranean gas as a geopolitical benefit to the United States. In her opening [statement](#), Chairwoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) noted that “[t]he United States has a vested interest in seeing these projects in the Eastern Mediterranean come to fruition in order to bolster our partners in the region but to also bolster our own national security interests.”

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Peres showing ‘real improvement’ two days after stroke

Former Israeli president Shimon Peres saw “real improvement” on Thursday but remained in serious condition after suffering a major stroke two days earlier. “There is another real improvement today,” Peres’s personal physician and son-in-law Rafi Walden said, describing his condition as serious but stable. He said it was likely his condition would remain that way for the coming days, reports [The Times of Israel](#). Peres, 93, remained in intensive care and was breathing with the help of a respirator, but was still able to respond to prompts as he had the previous day. After feeling unwell during lunch on Tuesday, Peres was rushed to the hospital in the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan for medical tests.