



Rabbinic Recap

The week of December 8, 2017

JERUSALEM

The United States recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital

On Wednesday, for the first time, the United States formally recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital city. President Trump also instructed the State Department to begin the process of moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem. The decision is more than an important benchmark—it is a milestone that corrects a historical wrong. Until now, Jerusalem was the only capital city in the world that the United States neither recognized nor declared as the location of its embassy. And critically, Wednesday's announcement reaffirmed America's commitment to the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. The decision to officially recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital in no way precludes future negotiations over the city's final status, borders, or the goal of two states for two peoples. Rather, that choice is consistent with bipartisan U.S. policy established in the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995. Moreover, both the Democratic and Republican party platforms have consistently, and explicitly, acknowledged Jerusalem as Israel's capital for the past several decades—including most recently in 2016.

For more information on the Jerusalem decision, please see this [AIPAC memo](#).

UNITED STATES CONGRESS

U.S. House passes bill to slash PA funds over terrorist stipends

The [Times of Israel reported](#) that on Tuesday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Taylor Force Act, legislation that would cut U.S. funding to the Palestinian Authority unless it discontinues its practice of paying monthly stipends to the families of terrorists who kill Israelis. Last month, the measure unanimously advanced out of committee, including exceptions allowing for U.S. funding to Palestinian water and childhood vaccination programs, as well as East Jerusalem hospitals. The bill must now pass the full Senate, which is expected to vote on it this month, when the upper chamber votes on a foreign operations bill it was packaged into last September. Named after Taylor Force, a former U.S. army officer who was stabbed to death by a Palestinian assailant while visiting Tel Aviv in March 2016, the bill garnered bipartisan support through the House.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

U.S., Israel Increase Energy Cooperation in Africa

On Dec. 4, the United States and Israel entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) [to increase access to energy in sub-Saharan Africa](#). The MOU will enable the Jewish state to join the Power Africa initiative, which is led by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Spearheaded by the United States, the initiative seeks to connect 60 million households in Africa to the electricity grid by 2030. "Israel is becoming a partner in one of the biggest aid programs available today," said Eli Groner, the director general at Israel's Prime Minister's Office. He added that joining the Power Africa initiative "is the manifestation of our unparalleled relationship with the U.S., assisting in the deepening of our ties with African nations." The new partnership will specifically allow both countries to contribute to the shared goals of (1) increasing outreach and collaboration among U.S. and Israeli companies to improve access to finance and explore investment opportunities; (2) deepening collaboration to expand electricity access; (3) expanding on-grid renewable, and off-grid efforts to extend energy across sub-Saharan Africa; and (4) encouraging new projects involving Israeli and U.S. companies throughout the African continent. U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman added, "Through Power Africa, the Israeli government and Israeli firms will literally be able to light up the nations of Africa, bettering their lives and their livelihoods."

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israeli device banishes finger-pricking for sugar levels in diabetes patients

Diabetes patients know that one of the greatest challenges in managing the ailment is tracking their blood sugar, or glucose, levels, according to the [Times of Israel](#). To do that the only option available today is through the use of standard glucose meters — devices that require multiple finger pricks each day, a painful process. For years, researchers have been trying to find a noninvasive, quicker and easier way to monitor blood glucose. Even the most advanced devices in use today, like needle sensors, which can track glucose continuously, need to be inserted under the skin every one to two weeks. Now, Caesarea-based startup Cnoga Medical Ltd. says it has come up with a way to track blood glucose levels without pricking or pain. Its glucose meter, already approved for use in numerous countries worldwide, uses a camera to provide a diagnosis of blood glucose levels by observing the changing colors of the user's finger. The technology got the green light on Monday from one of the world's leading diabetes specialists, Prof. Andreas Pfützner, MD, PhD, who came to Israel to present the company with his findings after having tested the technology in two clinical studies in Germany. "The results were surprising," he told The Times of Israel in a phone interview. Pfützner held two clinical trials at his institute to validate the performance of the technology, and in both studies he found that the medical device performed "with a surprising level of accuracy," the same as that of needle sensors. "We are the first company in the world that has managed to build a noninvasive glucose meter that complies with global accuracy and quality standards," said Cnoga's VP of global sales and marketing Steven Macwan by phone. "This is the first commercial noninvasive glucose meter."