



Rabbinic Recap

The week of January 26, 2018

U.S. ADMINISTRATION

Vice President Pence: America Stands with Israel

From Jan. 21-23, Vice President Mike Pence visited Israel, following brief stops in Egypt and Jordan, [AIPAC's News Hub reported](#). While in Israel, the vice president met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, addressed the Knesset and toured Yad Vashem (Israel's Holocaust museum) and the Western Wall. In his speech to the Knesset, Vice President Pence reaffirmed the United States' commitment to Israel, stating "the alliance between our two countries has never been stronger, and the friendship between our peoples has never been deeper." "I am here to convey a simple message from the heart of the American people: America stands with Israel. We stand with Israel because your cause is our cause, your values are our values, and your fight is our fight." Emphasizing that "Jerusalem is Israel's capital," Pence revealed that "the United States Embassy will open before the end of next year." On the Israeli-Palestinian front, the vice president reiterated America's commitment to peace in the region. "The United States appreciates [Israel's] declared willingness to resume direct peace negotiations with the Palestinian Authority. And today, we strongly urge the Palestinian leadership to return to the table," he added. Pence also highlighted the United States' commitment to combatting Iran's aggression in the region. "We're working to enact effective and lasting restraints on Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs...Whatever the outcome of those negotiations, today I have a solemn promise to Israel, to all the Middle East, and to the world: The United States of America will never allow Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon." Vice President Pence was the first Vice President of the United States to address the Knesset.

Tillerson: U.S. Strategy in Syria Must Address Iranian Threat

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson announced on Jan. 17 that the United States will remain engaged in Syria to counter Iran's "malicious" influence in Syria, among four other U.S. priorities in the war-torn country, as also [reported on AIPAC's News Hub](#). "Continued strategic threats to the U.S. from not just ISIS and al-Qaeda but from others persist. And this threat I'm referring to is principally Iran," said Tillerson. "As part of its strategy to create a northern arch, stretching from Iran to Lebanon and the Mediterranean, Iran has dramatically strengthened its presence in Syria by deploying Iranian Revolutionary Guard troops; supporting Lebanese Hezbollah; and importing proxy forces from Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere. Through its position in Syria, Iran is positioning to continue attacking U.S. interests, our allies, and personnel in the region." The United States is maintaining a presence in Syria in the hopes that "Iranian influence in Syria is diminished, their dreams of a northern arch are denied, and Syria's neighbors are secure from all threats emanating from Syria." "U.S. disengagement from Syria would provide Iran the opportunity to further strengthen its position in Syria. As we have seen from Iran's proxy wars and public announcements, Iran seeks dominance in the Middle East and the destruction of our ally, Israel. As a destabilized nation and one bordering Israel, Syria presents an opportunity that Iran is all too eager to exploit," said Tillerson.

IRAN

France Says Iran Not Respecting U.N. Text on Ballistic Missiles

France's foreign minister accused Iran on Monday of not respecting part of a U.N. resolution that calls on Tehran to refrain from work on ballistic missiles designed to carry nuclear warheads, according to a [report by Reuters via the Jerusalem Post](#). Speaking on arrival at a European Union foreign ministers meeting in Brussels, Jean-Yves Le Drian also said the 28 ministers would reiterate their concerns over Iran's activities in Yemen, Lebanon and Syria, which he described as destabilizing. "We will also have the opportunity of underlining our firmness on Iran's compliance with United Nations Resolution 2231, which limits access to ballistic capacity and which Iran does not respect," Le Drian said.

JORDAN

Netanyahu Thanks U.S. for 'Behind-The-Scenes' Work to End Jordan Embassy Impasse

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday thanked the United States for its "behind-the-scenes efforts" to solve Israel's diplomatic standoff with Jordan over a shooting incident at the Israeli embassy in Amman, the [Times of Israel reported](#). "Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed his appreciation to [Jared] Kushner and [Jason] Greenblatt for their behind-the-scenes efforts, which helped solve the crisis," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement. Following the July incident, in which an Israeli security guard shot dead two Jordanians after one allegedly attacked him, Jordan had prevented Israel from reopening its embassy or returning its ambassador to Amman in protest of the warm reception given to the guard and embassy staff upon their return to Israel in the immediate aftermath of the incident. Israel will pay \$5 million in compensation to the families, diplomats in Jordan told the al-Rai newspaper Saturday. Israeli officials have previously said an undisclosed sum would be paid to the Jordanian government and not to the families. The paper reported that the sum will be transferred by Jordan's leaders to the families. With an agreement now reached on ending the diplomatic impasse, [Israel's] Channel 10 reported Saturday that Israel is working to arrange a phone call between Netanyahu and Jordan's King Abdullah II, as well as an eventual meeting.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Massive Cybertech Conference and Expo Planned in Israel

Some 13,500 attendees, 120 companies, 90 startups and 67 multinational delegations are expected at Cybertech Israel conference and expo, January 29-31 at the Tel Aviv Convention Center, [according to Israel21c](#). Cybertech Israel, the biggest annual cyber technologies event outside of the United States, will showcase commercial problem-solving strategies and solutions for the global cyber threat in a wide range of sectors: finance, transportation, utilities, defense, R&D, manufacturing, telecommunication, health and government. Among special events planned are Cyber NYC sponsored by the New York City Economic Development Corporation, Tech against Terrorism sponsored by the U.N., Cyber for Airports, Cybermed, and sessions focusing on cyber for trains, ports and maritime.