

## **AIPAC Applauds U.S.-Israel Ties**

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As the President said at the White House today while meeting with the Prime Minister of Israel, “the bond between the United States and Israel is unbreakable. It encompasses our national security interests, our strategic interests, but most importantly, the bond of two democracies who share a common set of values.”

AIPAC strongly agrees.

The United States and Israel are strategic partners, bound together by common interests and shared values. That is why the American people are overwhelmingly pro-Israel and support a strong and abiding US-Israel relationship that guarantees the security of the Jewish State.

President Obama underscored America’s special relationship with Israel again today: “We strongly believe that, given its size, its history, the region that it’s in, and the threats that are leveled against us -- against it, that Israel has unique security requirements. It’s got to be able to respond to threats or any combination of threats in the region. And that’s why we remain unwavering in our commitment to Israel’s security. And the United States will never ask Israel to take any steps that would undermine their security interests.”

Likewise, we applaud the President’s call on the Palestinians to accept Israel’s long standing invitation to begin direct peace negotiations, saying explicitly, “my hope is...direct talks [begin] well before the moratorium has expired.”

For over 60 years Israel has offered its hand in peace, demonstrating again and again its willingness to make real and heartrending sacrifices – altering borders, relinquishing territory, uprooting families and entire communities – in the pursuit of peace.

As the President said, “I believe Prime Minister Netanyahu wants peace, that he’s willing to take risks for peace.”

It is AIPAC’s hope that the Palestinian Authority will match Israel’s commitment to peace and respond to the Obama Administration’s demand for direct talks - and that Arab states will likewise heed President Obama’s calls for meaningful steps toward normalization and peace with the Jewish State.

Israel is taking meaningful steps and tangible risks for peace.

Now it is time – well past time – for the Palestinians and Arabs States to heed U.S. calls and match Israel’s commitment to peace with actions of their own.

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