

AIPAC

Policy Conference 2006 Opening Plenary: Global Challenge: How the International Community Can Stop Iran

Mr. Ehud Olmert

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Tape 2269

Irvine, CA
(949) 477 4972

Ubiquis Reporting
New York, NY
(212) 227 7440

Redwood City, CA
(650) 365 9199

w w w . u b i q u i s . c o m

Line#	Timecode	Quote
1		[START TAPE 1 SIDE A]
2		MS. AMY FRIEDKIN: In just over three
3		weeks, Israelis will go to the polls
4		for an election that will replace the
5	00:25:46	Prime Minister and reshape the
6		government for years to come. The
7		Israeli political parties are in full
8		election mode and their candidates
9		for Prime Minister are campaigning
10	00:26:00	feverishly around the country. At
11		three points during this conference
12		we will go via satellite to Israel
13		where all three of the major
14		candidates for Prime Minister will
15	00:26:14	take time out from their busy
16		schedules to address this AIPAC
17		policy conference. It is now my
18		honor to introduce our first such
19		speaker. The man who is Israel's
20	00:26:31	acting Prime Minister has shouldered
21		the responsibility of leadership
22		following the sudden collapse of
23		Prime Minister Sharon. Ehud Olmert
24		has been a close ally of the Prime
25	00:26:44	Minister, and was an early advocate

Line#	Timecode	Quote
26		of Israel's historic disengagement
27		from Gaza and parts of the West Bank.
28		Ehud Olmert's close relationship with
29		AIPAC deepened during the decade he
30	00:26:59	served as Jerusalem's mayor. He has
31		met frequently with AIPAC's lay
32		leadership and professional staff and
33		he was the featured speaker at this
34		policy conference in 2004. The
35	00:27:14	recently formed Kadima [phonetic]
36		party has rallied behind his
37		leadership in the run up to the
38		elections. Please join me in
39		welcoming Israel's acting Prime
40	00:27:26	Minister and the Kadima party
41		candidate for Prime Minister, Ehud
42		Olmert.
43		MR. EHUD OLMERT: Thank you very much
44		Amy for your kind words. Thank you
45	00:27:50	all for your very warm welcome.
46		President Bernice Manocherian, the
47		incoming president, Mr. Howard
48		Friedman, the executive vice
49		president, my friend Howard Core,
50	00:28:07	member of the board, distinguished

Line#	Timecode	Quote
51		delegates, the 5,000 strong
52		participants of the annual meeting of
53		AIPAC, dear friends. It is quite
54		unusual event for me to speak to you
55	00:28:24	at this time from Jerusalem and not
56		as a guest speaker as I did several
57		times in a very impressive podium in
58		Washington. But these are different
59		circumstances, and you all understand
60	00:28:40	it. I had to take over under very
61		unusual circumstances for my friend
62		and hero, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon
63		when he collapsed. And since then I
64		had to deal on a daily basis, on an
65	00:28:59	hourly basis with all the pressing
66		issues which always make the unusual
67		agenda of the people of Israel and
68		the state of Israel. And let me say
69		from the outset, thank god we have
70	00:29:15	you. (12:22:39:22)Thank god we have
71		AIPAC. The greatest supporter and
72		friend that we have in the whole
73		world. An organization made up of
74		people who care so much and who
75		devoted so much

Line#	Timecode	Quote
76	00:29:33	of their energies and resources and
77		love and care to the people of Israel
78		and for the friendship between the
79		United States and the state of
80		Israel. (13:01:15:19) You know how
81		important
82	00:29:47	America is to the state of Israel. I
83		think you have proved over the years
84		that you also understand how
85		significant Israel can be to the
86		United States of America. The role
87	00:30:00	that you have played, the
88		contribution that you have made, the
89		involvement that you have manifested
90		over all these years, have been an
91		essential ingredient in the strengths
92	00:30:14	that we have and the ability of the
93		state of Israel to carry on under
94		very unusual and difficult
95		circumstances. There are two main
96		issues which bother me as acting
97	00:30:30	Prime Minister, and the people of
98		Israel on these days. And I'm not
99		going to talk to you about elections,
100		and about campaigns. These we'll

Line#	Timecode	Quote
101		leave for the Israeli scene. I want
102	00:30:39	to talk to you about the two main
103		points on the national agenda which I
104		believe is also a very important for
105		the international agenda. First, the
106		emergence of Hamas as the leading
107	00:30:54	power in the Palestinian authority.
108		We always thought that this was a
109		mistake to allow a terrorist
110		organization to participate in what
111		pretended to be democratic elections,
112	00:31:07	because what is the essence of
113		democracy if you allow a body, a
114		group of people which do not really
115		believe in democracy to take - to
116		make use of the umbrella of democracy
117	00:31:21	in order to seek goals which are
118		entirely opposed to the very essence
119		of what democracy's all about. And
120		this is the Hamas. Hamas is a
121		terrorist organization. I heard
122	00:31:35	today that after they emerged from
123		the meeting with high officials in
124		Moscow, the leader of Hamas said time
125		and again that he will not make peace

Line#	Timecode	Quote
126		with Israel, that he will not
127	00:31:46	recognize the state of Israel, that
128		he will not accept all these basic
129		requirements which are essential if
130		we are to move forward in the next
131		few months towards some kind of
132	00:31:59	meaningful political process. So
133		this is Hamas and therefore such
134		Hamas will not be recognized by the
135		state of Israel, and we will not
136		cooperate with a Palestinian
137	00:32:10	authority which is governed by such
138		an organization as Hamas. This is of
139		course an unfortunate development.
140		But I'm not pessimistic because I
141		promise you that while we will
142	00:32:29	continue to fight terror without any
143		hesitation, at the same time we will
144		look for every possible opportunity
145		to build up a process that may lead
146		towards a resolution of some of the
147	00:32:44	outstanding issues which are on the
148		agenda between us and the
149		Palestinians. We will take the
150		initiative as Prime Minister Sharon

Line#	Timecode	Quote
151		did and we will aspire within the
152	00:33:01	next few years to ultimately decide
153		on the permanent borders for the
154		state of Israel while separating from
155		the Palestinians. We want the
156		Palestinians to have their own
157	00:33:15	independent state in a contiguous
158		territory in the Judea, Samaria, and
159		Gaza. And we want to be separated
160		from them without sacrificing the
161		essential security needs of the state
162	00:33:28	of Israel. And towards the
163		achievement of this goal, we will
164		take the initiative if we will find
165		that the Palestinians are not ready,
166		are not prepared and are not mature
167	00:33:42	enough to be able to make the
168		necessary adjustments within
169		themselves in order to be ready for
170		this challenge. We count on the
171		cooperation, the partnership and the
172	00:33:55	friendship with the United States of
173		America under the leadership of
174		George W. Bush. George W. Bush has
175		proved himself as a great friend, as

Line#	Timecode	Quote
176		a courageous leader, as a person who
177	00:34:10	stands by his principles. And I know
178		how much devoted he is to the war
179		against terror and we know that we
180		can find no better partner in the
181		whole world than George W. Bush to
182	00:34:25	fight together with him against
183		terrorists, against terrorist
184		organizations, whether they are in
185		the Middle East or in any other part
186		of the world. But while we will
187	00:34:36	fight together with the United
188		States, with the support of the
189		United States against terrorists, we
190		will also seek, with the leadership
191		of America and build up the necessary
192	00:34:48	platform for a continuous political
193		process that will bring us closer to
194		the eventual agreement that will
195		resolve some of the pressing issues
196		between us and the Palestinians. We
197	00:35:04	don't want to administer the
198		Palestinians. We don't want to
199		dominate the Palestinians. We want
200		to allow them to have their

Line#	Timecode	Quote
201		independent state and at the same
202	00:35:12	time we will not compromise on the
203		security of the state of Israel and
204		the personal security of every single
205		Israeli citizen in every part of our
206		country. This is our policy. This
207	00:35:23	is the policy of my present
208		government and hopefully if I'm
209		elected Prime Minister within three
210		weeks, which I hope very much, this
211		will be the policy of the government
212	00:35:32	of Israel in the next four years.
213		There is another issue which is a
214		source of great concern. I know that
215		you heard earlier my good friend and
216		a wonderful person, Ambassador John
217	00:35:47	Bolton. He has been the leading
218		administration representative in the
219		campaign against the attempts by Iran
220		to possess nuclear capabilities and
221		now as Ambassador in the United
222	00:36:02	Nations, he is leading this campaign
223		further and hopefully together with
224		other European countries he will
225		succeed in forcing some measures

Line#	Timecode	Quote
226		against Iran in order to prevent them
227	00:36:17	from enriching uranium which can
228		become a major source of threat to
229		the very existence of Israel and many
230		other countries. Iran is a major
231		threat to all the civilized world. A
232	00:36:31	country whose leader says openly and
233		officially that he hopes for the
234		liquidation of another nation as
235		President Amadi-Nejad said about the
236		state of Israel. He's someone that
237	00:36:46	has to be condemned by the civilized
238		world, and we have to take all the
239		necessary measures so that we can
240		stop such a leader from possessing
241		weapons that might jeopardize us and
242	00:36:58	many other countries. Again, it will
243		be impossible to do it alone. It
244		will be possible if America is with
245		us and thank god America is with us
246		on this issue. So finally let me
247	00:37:16	thank you so much, Amy and Bernice
248		and Howard and Howard Core and all
249		the other board members and the many
250		participants that you so graciously

Line#	Timecode	Quote
251		invited me to be - to speak to you in
252	00:37:32	this manner this year. I promise you
253		that next year I'll be in Washington
254		and as I did in the past, I'll speak
255		from the podium. And as I did in the
256		past, I will tell you the whole
257	00:37:47	truth, and I know that when I'll do
258		that then you'll stand up and cheer
259		for the state of Israel because you
260		are the friends of Israel and god
261		bless all of you for that. Thank you
262	00:38:01	very much. Thank you. Thank you.
263		MS. AMY FRIEDKIN: You can't see us
264		but we're standing and we're waving
265		to you, Ehud.
266		MR. EHUD OLNERT: Amy, thank you very
267	00:38:35	much. I feel you very much.
268		MS. AMY FRIEDKIN: Well I know I
269		speak -
270		MR. EHUD OLNERT: Thank you all.
271		MS. AMY FRIEDKIN: You're welcome. I
272	00:38:41	know I speak for everyone here when I
273		say to the acting Prime Minister that
274		in these difficult times we want to
275		convey to you and to the people of

Line#	Timecode	Quote
276		Israel that you are not alone.
277	00:38:55	MR. EHUD OLNERT: Thank you.
278		MS. AMY FRIEDKIN: We stand with you
279		in our common search for security and
280		for peace and we send our thoughts
281		and our prayers to Prime Minister
282	00:39:09	Sharon and to his family. May - may
283		his family and the family of Israel
284		know that you are always in our
285		thoughts. Always a part of us.
286		MR. EHUD OLNERT: Thank you.
287	00:39:26	MS. AMY FRIEDKIN: Again, thank you
288		Ehud, we very much appreciate the
289		time that you have taken today to
290		speak to us, and we want to thank all
291		of the speakers this afternoon who
292	00:39:35	shared their insight and their
293		analysis. My friends, in just a
294		moment we will have lunch. After
295		lunch - after lunch, please proceed
296		to the afternoon programs that you
297	00:39:50	pre-registered for. They will begin
298		at 1:30. It's now my pleasure to
299		call on Rabbi Jonathan Magadovich
300		[phonetic] of Congregation B'nai

Line#	Timecode	Quote
301		Torah in Highland Park, Illinois, who
302	00:40:05	will lead us in the [unintelligible].
303		RABBI JONATHAN MAGADOVICH: Thank you
304		Amy. Thank God we are together. We
305		rise. God is blessing. God rules the
306		universe. God creates this bread.
307	00:40:38	We eat this bread. We gain strength.
308		May we always use that strength with
309		wisdom, humility and love. Please
310		join as we chant. [foreign audio]
311		You may be seated. Thank you.
312	00:41:21	MS. AMY FRIEDKIN: Thank you.
313		[music]
314		[END OF RECORDING]