



Israel

Israel is America's strongest ally in the Middle East and one of our greatest allies in the entire world. Our close alliance is built on shared values and interests. Israel's strength is critical to U.S. national security interests. A stronger Israel means a stronger America. It would be one of my priorities in Congress to work to further strengthen the U.S. – Israel relationship and unequivocally stand with Israel. Israel continues to be surrounded by enemies who want to see nothing short of its destruction. Israel's fight is our fight. Israel's threats are our threats. And America must always be there standing shoulder to shoulder with Israel.

It's important that U.S. policy reflects the realities of the situation in the Middle East:

Iran

Iran is the leading state sponsor of terrorism in the entire world and actively supports enemies of both the U.S. and Israel. Iran, which repeatedly threatens Israel with destruction, must never obtain a nuclear weapon. Period. The nuclear deal struck by the previous administration was a disaster. It does not block Iran's path towards nuclear weapons but instead paves the way for Iran to have an industrial-sized capability to build them in the near future. The deal has also provided the Iranian regime billions and billions of dollars to support terrorism all over the world, which Iran is using to expand its destabilizing activities right now, undermining Israel and our allies in the region.

There is a reason why Israel and many of our Gulf Allies were adamantly opposed to it. If the deal is not fixed to address its fundamental flaws, the U.S. should walk away from the deal, re-impose sanctions, and bring maximum pressure on the Iranian regime. At the same time, the U.S. must continue its vocal support for the Iranian people, who have courageously taken to the streets in protest, and further take steps to show our solidarity with them.

Finally, it is in our national security interests to work closer with Israel and other countries in the Middle East to counter Iran's support for its terrorist proxies, Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria, and the Houthis in Yemen. This strategy should include imposing more sanctions against Iran and its terrorist

proxies, as well as pushing back against Iran's efforts to establish a corridor through Iraq, Syria, and into Lebanon and a permanent military presence in Syria, which threatens the security of not only Israel but also Jordan and our other allies in the region.

Israel and the Palestinians

The core of the conflict remains the Palestinian leadership's refusal to recognize Israel within any borders; continued incitement and glorification of violence, including through providing over \$350 million (in 2017) in monthly salaries to terrorists and the families of those who died committing terrorist attacks; indoctrination of Palestinian children with hatred towards Israel; and efforts to delegitimize Israel whether it is at the U.N. or other international forums. There is simply no moral equivalence between Israel and a Palestinian leadership that engages in such hostility towards Israel.

Unfortunately, Israelis have not only been injured or murdered in Palestinian terrorist attacks but U.S. citizens have as well. It is important that the U.S. speak out against and condemn Palestinian terrorism and all those who support and encourage it.

To begin to resolve the conflict, the U.S. must hold the Palestinian leadership accountable by withholding U.S. assistance and making it clear the U.S. will not tolerate their nefarious behavior. The U.S. can help facilitate negotiations, but I also believe that it is not the role of the U.S. or, for that matter, the U.N. to dictate or impose a solution on Israel. This was one of the principal reasons why it was wrong for President Obama to veto Security Council Resolution 2334 in December 2016, which betrayed bipartisan policy at the U.N. for decades. It also wrongly declared that places such as the Old City of Jerusalem, including Western Wall, the holiest place in Israel where Jews can pray, were so-called illegally "occupied Palestinian territory."

The U.S. also must never ask Israel to withdraw to the 1949 armistice lines, which prior to the Six Day War in 1967 left Israel only 8-9 miles wide. These lines are completely indefensible, especially amid a rising tide of radical Islamic terrorists from Hamas to Hezbollah to ISIS, all on Israel's borders, that seek Israel's destruction. The U.S. and the international community saw what happened after Israel left Gaza in 2005: Hamas took over, launched tens of thousands of rockets at Israeli civilians, and built underground tunnels targeting Israeli communities on the Gaza border.

Ensuring Israel's security, including defensible borders, in any potential deal with the Palestinians will guarantee a stronger Israel, which is in U.S. national security interests.

Israel and the U.N.

The U.N. continues to serve as a hotbed of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activity. It singles out Israel for condemnation more than any other country in the world. It is unacceptable and long past time that the U.S. uses its leverage as its largest contributor to push back against this obsessive hostility.

The U.S. must also always stand with Israel at the U.N. and veto any biased resolution that undermines our close ally in the Security Council.

Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS)

Any effort, whether by foreign countries or international institutions like the U.N., that seeks to encourage, facilitate, or impose BDS on Israel must be opposed in all its forms. This effort seeks to isolate, weaken, and destroy Israel. It is unacceptable, illegitimate, and discriminatory. Israel offers so much to the world, and the U.S. along with the international community should take steps to strengthen its relationship with Israel.

Jerusalem

Jerusalem has been the capital of Israel for three millennia and the capital of the modern State of Israel for 70 years. I was so proud when the Trump Administration recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and announced plans to move our embassy there. It was long past time to do this. In Jerusalem -- and Israel as a whole -- people of all faiths and creeds can worship freely without fear of oppression. Sadly, the same can't be said of other nations throughout the region. It's important that other countries also move their embassies to Jerusalem and that Jerusalem be recognized as Israel's capital by the international community.

Supporting Israel's Right to Defend Itself

Israel, like any other sovereign nation, has every right to defend itself if attacked, if an attack is imminent, or to act pre-emptively to ensure its security. Period. Any legislation on Israel passed by Congress should work to strengthen Israel against the very real threats that not only seek to harm Israel but often times America as well.

It is also critically important to speak out in defense of Israel as it faces difficult enemies deliberately putting their terrorist infrastructure in civilian areas. Israel takes extraordinary steps to avoid civilian casualties, which must be lauded and defended publicly against an often times false media narrative that terrorist groups exploit to undermine Israel's justified and legitimate actions in defense of its citizens.

Foreign Aid

Israel must have what it needs to defend itself. A key aspect of this principle is providing security assistance to Israel, which includes U.S. – Israel missile defense programs, such as Iron Dome, David's Sling, and Arrow 2 and 3. U.S. assistance to Israel is unique because it not only helps to bolster a close ally but also serves as an investment in our own security as well. The U.S. must also maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME) to ensure Israel has superior military capabilities against its enemies and against other countries in the region that are building up their military capabilities as well.

Economy

New Mexico and Israel share a special economic relationship. In 2016, data showed that Israel was New Mexico's second-largest trading partner. New Mexico exported \$1.1 billion in products and services to Israel in 2015. I look forward to working in Congress to build on this relationship and the success we've already seen.

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