



United States-Israel Position Paper

The United States of America and Israel have a deep, special, and unbreakable bond. The United States was the first country to recognize the Jewish state on the day of its establishment. Over the last 70 years, our relationship has deepened and grown stronger. I value Israel as America's closest and most reliable ally in a volatile region of the world, as the sole democracy in the Middle East, and as a safe-haven and homeland for the Jewish people.

When I visited Israel, I observed the fruits of the friendship between our nations firsthand. I was eager to immerse myself in the well-preserved religious sites, and I found myself enamored by Israel's robust democracy and incredible diversity. Our relationship must be permanent and durable -- one that is nourished on an ongoing basis and withstands any temporary policy disagreements. If elected to the U.S. Congress, I will work to strengthen this crucial international relationship and partner with Israel to advance our common goals and values.

ISRAELI SECURITY

Israel is located in one of the most volatile regions in the world. When I visited, I saw firsthand the imminent threats facing the country when I stood on the Golan Heights and visited a kibbutz near the Gaza Strip. I will never forget the vulnerability I felt for the nation. As a black person in a community where occurrences of gunfire are not uncommon, I understood the vulnerability felt by Israelis facing the real risk of rocket attacks and the fears of parents forced to squeeze their children into bomb shelters on the Gaza border.

I am committed to Israeli security and believe that Israelis should live in safety and peace. As an American, I am proud our government invested in Israel's Iron Dome system, which has saved countless Israeli lives and is now deployed to protect our own U.S. servicemembers. I believe Israel has a right to defend itself and that the United States must continue to help Israel retain its qualitative military edge.

As a member of congress, I will support the annual foreign aid bill and its provisions providing military aid to Israel. I support the Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Israel that was negotiated by the Obama Administration -- which provides \$3.8 billion in annual military funding (including \$500 million for missile defense) -- with no further conditions. It is worth noting that the majority of these funds are spent in the United States.

IRAN

Iran must not be allowed to acquire nuclear weapons. Among the many risks posed by a nuclear Iran is the existential threat it would present to Israel, who Iran has threatened to “wipe off the map.” I also fear that Iran’s acquisition of a nuclear bomb would spur a nuclear arms race in the Middle East and lead to Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and others seeking nuclear weapons capabilities. I support President Biden’s efforts to get a longer, stronger, and broader nuclear agreement with Iran. In Congress, I will be following his efforts closely and will encourage his administration to reach a deal that addresses the shortcomings of the JCPOA, including its failure to address Iran’s ballistic missile program or Iran’s support for regional terrorist proxies like Hezbollah and Hamas. The deal’s sunset provisions must also be extended to prevent Iran’s import and export of sophisticated weapons and prevent further development of nuclear capabilities.

ANTISEMITISM

The spike in hate crimes and antisemitism is very concerning to me, both in the United States and abroad. While the rise in global anti-Semitism underscores the importance of Israel’s security, Jews must be safe everywhere.

I oppose the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement which seeks to weaken, isolate, and delegitimize Israel. The BDS movement was founded by people who oppose Israel’s right to exist and want to use it as a means of inflicting harm on Israel. BDS is also counterproductive to peacefully resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Recent events remind us that antisemitism still exists here in the United States and must be confronted. This includes white Supremacists and neo-Nazis marching in Charlottesville chanting “Jews will not replace us;” shootings at places of worship like the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh; an insurrection at our nation’s capital carried out by people wearing, among other things, “Camp Auschwitz” t-shirts; and even a member of congress trafficking in conspiracy theories about wealthy Jewish families using space lasers to start wildfires.

As an African American, whose people have been subjected to institutional racism for more than 400 years, I have some understanding of the impact this kind of prejudice and hatred can have. Therefore, I look at support of Israel as also supporting the security of the Jewish people.

THE PEACE PROCESS

A two-state solution, where Israelis and Palestinians live side-by-side in peace and security, is the best solution to resolving the conflict.

Peace can only be achieved by Israelis and Palestinians sitting together, negotiating with one another and finding a resolution to the conflict. Attempts to impose a resolution to the conflict -- whether by the United States, European Union, United Nations, or others -- are destined to failure. Only if the two parties, Israelis and Palestinians, negotiate an agreement and are invested in it can there be hope of it succeeding and standing the test of time.

In order to move the peace process forward, Palestinians must recommit to achieving statehood peacefully. Rather than attempting to achieve statehood by going to international bodies or pursuing claims against Israel in international courts, Palestinians should return to the negotiating table with Israel. Similarly, Palestinians must stop practices which promote terrorism and undermine confidence in their commitment to peace, such as making payments to the families of those who perpetrate acts of terrorism.

Israel too should demonstrate their commitment to achieving a two-state solution by stopping construction of settlements on land the Palestinians see as the site of their future state. Israeli leaders should also desist from talk of annexation of parts or all of the West Bank. Such actions also do not create a climate for peace and reconciliation.

Hamas is a terrorist organization which forcefully seized control of the Gaza strip from the Palestinian Authority in 2007. Since that time, they have fired tens of thousands of rockets into Israel, terrorizing the residents of southern Israel and beyond, and have dug tunnels into Israel hoping to perpetrate terror attacks to kill and kidnap Israelis. Hamas has never recognized Israel's right to exist and continues to maintain a state of war against the Jewish state. Ultimately, for peace to be achieved, Gaza must be brought under the control of the Palestinian Authority or Hamas must recognize Israel, renounce violence and recognize the agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. In the meantime, Israel must have the ability to defend its citizens from the threat posed by Hamas.

While achieving peace between Israel and Palestinians may seem like a far-off dream, as a member of congress I will work to promote greater cooperation and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. Only by fostering hope, defeating terror, and improving the lives of ordinary people with a climate of trust, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence will there be an opportunity to resolve the conflict.

I am encouraged by the normalization agreements negotiated between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan. These agreements are encouraging signs that things are changing in the Middle East and Israel is gaining acceptance in the Arab world. I will support efforts of President Biden and his administration to promote additional normalization agreements between Arab countries and the State of Israel.

AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN ISRAEL & CULTURE VISITS

The relationship between the U.S. and Israel is defined by more than just issues related to conflicts in the region. Israel has many highly regarded technology companies and, working with their American counterparts, we can solve more problems, address human needs, and promote economic growth. We can learn so much from each other and, as a Member of Congress, I will support initiatives to promote further cooperation and collaboration between the U.S. and Israel.

I also support programs that can improve the lives of Palestinians and their economy, and support U.S. funding of programs that do so while preventing the diversion of funds to advance hostility toward Israel.

Israel recycles nearly 90% of its wastewater, leads the world in water conservation and desalinization technology, and is the only country in the world with more trees at the turn of this century than the last. Israel's expertise in renewable energy, water resource management, and environmental security – as well as cybersecurity and health care technology -- are additional reasons it is a valuable partner for the United States and are areas for further development and cooperation.

CONCLUSION

Jewish Americans and African Americans have a natural bond based on shared histories of slavery and emancipation. Similarly, the United States and Israel have shared histories of being places of refuge for people seeking the freedom to practice their faith while living in freedom and security. As an African American woman and strong supporter of the U.S.-Israel alliance, I look forward to working with the Jewish community to strengthen our bonds and the relationship between the United States and Israel.