

The Huffington Post

November 17, 2008

[This is the print preview: Back to normal view »](#)



[Yoav Sivan](#)

Posted November 4, 2008 | 11:53 PM (EST)

## President Obama: Israel Is Ready for You

**Read More:** [2008 Election](#), [American Jews](#), [Barack Obama](#), [Barack Obama Germany](#), [Bush](#), [Election](#), [Election Analysis](#), [Election Day](#), [Election Day 2008](#), [Election Reaction](#), [Election Results](#), [Germany](#), [HuffPost Election Analysis](#), [HuffPost Election Reaction](#), [Iran](#), [Israel](#), [Israel Palestinian Conflict](#), [Jews Obama](#), [Joe Biden](#), [John McCain](#), [Obama](#), [Obama Election Day](#), [Obama Presidency](#), [Obama President](#), [Obama Wins](#), [President Obama](#), [Presidential Election](#), [Presidential Results](#), [Sarah Palin](#), [Politics News](#)

Show your support.  
Buzz this article up.



Get Breaking News Alerts

 

never spam



Share



Print



Comments

The election of Barack Obama to be the 44th President of the United States is good news for Israel.

After eight years of failed American policy in the Middle East, President Obama has the chance to reassert constructive American leadership in one of the most complex geopolitical regions of the world.

To his credit, President George W. Bush has been a steadfast ally of Israel throughout his two terms in the White House. He made no effort to conceal his commitment to the Jewish state, which is no small favor. Israel, a regular scapegoat for the world's woes, usually cannot pride itself on its numerous friends among the nations or at the United Nations, where Israel-bashing a blood sport. Under President Bush, the United States consistently vetoed cynical resolutions in the U.N. Security Council.

But American sympathy, as important as it may be, is not enough. In international relations as in personal relations, genuine affection can blind one's eyes to what is really needed. And what is needed for Israel is an American administration willing to engage fully in the work of brokering a deal between Israel and its neighbors, especially the Palestinians.

And that's what Barack Obama needs to do from day one.

Everybody knows what a peace treaty between the Israelis and Palestinians would look like. The Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert of the centrist party Kadima disclosed in an interview that an agreement would include Israel's withdrawal to the 1967' border with some land swaps on 1:1 ratio, with the dismantling of most settlements. Even with regard to Jerusalem, the hottest potato in the meal, Olmert admits there would be some sort of a compromise.

The realization of the common expectation has proved a tricky matter. Weak leadership in Israel and among the Palestinians, coupled with mutual suspicion, has made the most plausible compromise a political impossibility. Only America can provide the collateral needed for such an agreement.

President Obama begins his term with vast international popularity, which can translate into extremely strong leverage. His exalted status around the world, notably in the European Union and to a lesser extent the Arab world, is antithesis of his predecessor's.

Given the landscape of the Presidential race, where the American Jewish vote was a force in several key states, Obama also made clear he would defend Israel's interests. And though his willingness to talk to Iran was viewed with suspicion by some Jewish Americans, Obama curried enough favor with the liberal American Jewish electorate through his liberal domestic proposals. In the end, he won 75 percent of the Jewish American vote.

Thus Obama has a better political leverage on all sides to succeed where his predecessor failed. For starters, no other U.S. President could possibly be in a better position to build an international coalition against Iran.

Obama can channel the overwhelming support he received during his short campaign visit to Berlin, bringing Germany on board as a key player. And that's especially important. Germany is Iran's number one trading partner; it is the country that can make economic sanctions hurt the most in Tehran. So far Germany's rhetoric has been soothing to Israeli ears, but its economic interests in Iran prevented it from acting.

Obama is also in a favorable position to bring together the United Nations, the European Community and the rest of international community to establish an effective response to Iran. His ability to promote sanctions is strengthened because he defended the principle of talking to your enemies, not just to friends.

Reports of an ailing President Ahmadinejad combined with the plummeting price of oil - well below the level Iran needs to balance its budget - is ravaging Iran's economy and shaking up its political system. Now more than at any other time in recent years, Iran is vulnerable to outside pressure, including diplomacy.

The longer the world waits for Iran to develop nuclear weapons fully, the more Israel is in danger. But this much is also true: A lasting peace is a necessary condition for the continuation of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.

The longer we wait, the worse for Israel.

President Barack Obama understands precisely that.

[Read more reaction from HuffPost bloggers to Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 presidential election](#)



stumble digg reddit del.icio.us news trust mixx.com

More in Politics...

- [Obama Meets With McCain At Transition Office...](#)
- [Obama Victory Triggers Racist Backlash: At Least...](#)
- [Obama-Clinton Negotiations: Why They've Gone Silent](#)
- [Ted Kennedy Returns To The Senate \(VIDEO\)](#)

HuffPost Stories Surging Right Now



[Paul Krugman Schools George Will On The Great Depression](#)



[Ken Silverstein: Five Reasons Hillary Clinton Should Not Be Secretary Of State](#)



[Terry Krepel: The Year WorldNetDaily Died](#)



[Cenk Uygur: The Center-Right Myth](#)



Ads by Google

## Exclusive Obama Items

Porcelain Collectors Plate, Mugs, Beer Mugs, Pint Glass & Mousepads.

[www.Discountmugs.com/Obama](http://www.Discountmugs.com/Obama)

Comments

5

Pending Comments

0

[FAQ: Comments and Moderation](#)[FAQ: HuffPost Accounts](#)  
[Post Comment](#)

**Want to reply to a comment?** Hint: Click "Reply" at the bottom of the comment; after being approved your comment will appear directly underneath the comment you replied to

View Comments:

- [Fruitarian](#) [See Profile](#) [I'm a Fan of Fruitarian](#) [permalink](#)

How typical that after 8 years of dealing with the John Wayne-esque Bush administration, that war-mongering Isreal would view an intelligent and thoughtful leader, who's willing to open up talks with Iran, as WEAK. If they're so afraid that there will be nuclear proliferation from that tiny country, wouldn't continued bullying and the tough cowboy act be like asking them to "make our day" and continue doing whatever they wanted?

It's leaders such as George W. Bush and Tzipi Livni that perpetuate fear and loathing on the international scene!

[Reply](#) [Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) Posted 10:44 AM on 11/06/2008

- jaielaw See Profile I'm a Fan of jaielaw [permalink](#)

Obama has urgent issues to deal with at home and in Iraq and Afghanistan. I very much hope he'll be dealing with those first instead of spending "day one" or even day 100 entering into the never-ending, no-win quagmire that is Palestine. But don't let that stop you guys from trying to work it out.

[Reply](#) [Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) Posted 12:28 PM on 11/05/2008

- Pupadup4oBama See Profile I'm a Fan of Pupadup4oBama [permalink](#)

Yes, the issues at home are urgent, and yes we need to bring our soldiers home from Iraq and Afghanistan - but as Yoav said with weak leadership on both sides - Obama coming in to help things along is not only beneficial for the parties involved, but for the rest of the world as well. If he sent CLINTON to take care of things then that would allow him to work on more domestic issues.

[Reply](#) [Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) Posted 12:36 PM on 11/05/2008

- yuval See Profile I'm a Fan of yuval [permalink](#)

obama use your momentum for peace in the meadle east.

i agree with every ward Yoav has said and i want to add that obama's huge victory is one he should use without any hesitation to swift the meadleast with his "hope" message in the middle east.

the credit that the american people has given him is incredible and should be politically used for practical reasons to move ahead fast the peace process. the israelies are now at a point where anything can be achieved with the right back up and right force. be aggressive and push to close deals as fast as you can Obama - history shows that gradual peace process costs blood. fast moves create fast results and a very important dynamics. what obama did in the states can be done in the meadle east.

[Reply](#) [Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) Posted 05:24 AM on 11/05/2008

- biwee See Profile I'm a Fan of biwee [permalink](#)

It is far more important to FORCE Israel into compliance with existing UN Security Council resolutions than it is to do anything else.

[Reply](#) [Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) Posted 03:28 AM on 11/05/2008

You must be [logged in](#) to reply to this comment. [Log in](#)



Ads by Google

## Exclusive Obama Items

Porcelain Collectors Plate, Mugs, Beer Mugs, Pint Glass & Mousepads.

[www.Discountmugs.com/Obama](http://www.Discountmugs.com/Obama)

 

- [Copyright © 2008 HuffingtonPost.com, Inc.](#) |
- [Archive](#) |
- [User Agreement](#) |
- [Privacy](#) |
- [Comment Policy](#) |
- [About Us](#) |
- [Powered by Movable Type](#)