



Israel Needs More Than Campaign Rhetoric From Obama

Obama's Campaign Promises Don't Match His Administration's Priorities

OBAMA HAS NOT DEMONSTRATED AN "EMOTION-BASED" BOND WITH ISRAEL

Obama: "I Want Everybody Here To Know Under My Administration, We Haven't Just Preserved The Unbreakable Bond With Israel, We Have Strengthened It." PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA: "I want everybody here to know under my administration, we haven't just preserved the unbreakable bond with Israel, we have strengthened it. We have stood by Israel's side in the face of criticism, our military and intelligence cooperation has never been closer. And obviously this is a moment of great uncertainty in the Middle East, given what's happening in Syria and what's happening in other places." (President Barack Obama, Remarks At A Campaign Event, West Palm Beach, FL, 7/19/12)

"Despite Making Pro-Israel Statements," Obama Has Struggled To Convey A Strong "Solidarity With Israel In Ways That Are Greater Than The Sum Of Specific Policies." "American Jewish supporters of Israel have gotten used to presidents conveying a sense of solidarity with Israel in ways that are greater than the sum of specific policies,' said Nathan J. Diament, the executive director for public policy of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America and an Obama acquaintance at Harvard Law School. 'President Obama, despite making pro-Israel statements, had trouble finding his voice to express that sense early in his presidency.' George W. Bush did not visit Israel until late in his second term, and Ronald Reagan did not visit at all — yet neither faced the same doubts about their attachment to the nation. Neither did Bill Clinton, a master empathizer who eulogized Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin after his 1995 assassination." (Scott Wilson, "Where Obama Failed On Forging Peace In The Middle East," [The Washington Post](#), 7/14/12)

- **Obama Has Not Visited Israel Since Becoming President.** "Obama visited Israel in 2008 while he was a presidential candidate but has not been back since. He has been to 30 countries, so far, as commander-in-chief, including Ghana, Ireland and El Salvador." (Cameron Joseph, "GOP: Romney can shame Obama, boost foreign policy credentials with Israel trip," [The Hill](#), 5/14/12)
- **Obama Completely Lacks "An Emotion-Based Relationship With Israel."** "What you saw, at several turns during Obama's management of this, was a complete lack of an emotion-based relationship with Israel,' said a former Palestinian political adviser to the Palestine Liberation

Organization, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide a candid view. ‘The Cairo speech was excellent, important,’ the adviser said. ‘But it didn’t preclude a Jerusalem speech. It didn’t show any emotional smarts.’” (Scott Wilson, “Where Obama Failed On Forging Peace In The Middle East,” [The Washington Post](#), 7/14/12)

OBAMA’S MISHANDLING OF THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS WEAKENED THE U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

In 2008, Obama Said As President He Would Make Middle East Peace A Top Priority. OBAMA: “As president, I will work to help Israel achieve the goal of two states, a Jewish state of Israel and a Palestinian state, living side by side in peace and security. And I won’t wait until the waning days of my presidency. I will take an active role, and make a personal commitment to do all I can to advance the cause of peace from the start of my administration.” (Senator Barack Obama, [Remarks At The AIPAC Policy Conference](#), Washington, D.C. 6/4/08)

Four Years Later, Obama Admitted, “I Have Not Been Able To Move The Peace Process Forward In The Middle East The Way I Wanted.” “Well, you know, the truth is that the things I can do, um, without Congress tend to be in the foreign policy area. And, you know, in that area I have not been able to move the peace process forward in the Middle East the way I wanted. It’s something we focused on very early. But the truth of the matter is, is that the parties, ultimately, they’ve got to want it as well.” ([WILA-ABC](#), 7/15/12)

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Obama Offered Adversaries “Olive Branches” While Publically Confronting Israel. “The new administration has pushed a reset button with Russia and sent new ambassadors to Syria and Venezuela; it has offered olive branches to Cuba and Burma. But for nearly three months it has been locked in a public confrontation with Israel over Jewish housing construction in Jerusalem and the West Bank. To a less visible extent, the two governments also have differed over policy toward Iran.” (Editorial, “Tough On Israel,” [The Washington Post](#), 7/30/09)

- **Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren Called Obama’s “Public Fight” Over Settlement Construction The Lowest Point In U.S.-Israeli Relations Since The Mid-1970s.** “Ambassador Michael Oren told Israeli consuls in the US during a conference that a nearly week-old public fight that broke out during Vice President Joe Biden’s visit marks a low point in diplomatic relations since the mid-1970s when the Ford administration reassessed ties with Israel over a disengagement agreement with Egypt and froze arms shipments.” (Joshua Mitnick, “US Israel Settlements Fight Marks Lowest Point Since 1970s: Ambassador,” [Christian Science Monitor](#), 3/15/10)

“After A Year And A Half Of Politically Costly Pressure On Israel, Obama Had Nothing To Show For It.” “On the evening of Sept. 1, from the East Room, Netanyahu turned to Abbas and said, ‘you are my partner in peace.’ The talks began. Three weeks later, Obama told the U.N. General Assembly in his annual address that ‘when we come back here next year, we can have an agreement that will lead to a new member of the United Nations — an independent, sovereign state of Palestine, living in peace with Israel.’ Within days, Israel’s settlement freeze expired and with it the direct talks. After a year and a half of politically costly pressure on Israel, Obama had nothing to show for it, except far less capital to work with at home and a damaged reputation among the Middle East veterans directly involved.” (Scott Wilson, “Where Obama Failed On Forging Peace In The Middle East,” [The Washington Post](#), 7/14/12)

- **Though Obama Claimed To “Understand The Nuances” Of The Middle East Peace Process, “His Attempts To Bring The Two Sides Together Failed In His First Term.”** “According to three people who were at the meeting, and to notes recounted by one of them, Obama sought to

reassure the skeptical attendees, telling them, 'Don't think we don't understand the nuances of the current issues. We do.' But it was his response a few minutes later that came to define his administration's relationship with Israel — and the reason many in the room that day, and even more outside of it, believe that his attempts to bring the two sides together failed in his first term." (Scott Wilson, "Where Obama Failed On Forging Peace In The Middle East," [The Washington Post](#), 7/14/12)

- **"The Administration Has Few, If Any, Achievements To Brag About Despite Having Invested Significant Diplomatic Capital In The Israeli-Palestinian Issue."** "After 2 ½ years, the administration has few, if any, achievements to brag about despite having invested significant diplomatic capital in the Israeli-Palestinian issue. If anything, one could make a case that the two sides are further apart because of the administration's actions, though, to be fair, ultimately it is up to the Israelis and Palestinians to make peace, not the United States." (Glenn Kessler, "Obama and Israel: Stalled Diplomacy Or 'Suspicion And Distrust'?" [The Washington Post's "Fact Checker"](#), 7/11/11)

AFTER FAILING TO ACHIEVE HIS MIDDLE EAST POLICIES, OBAMA NOW PLAYING FOR TIME WHILE ISRAELIS WONDER WHAT A SECOND TERM COULD BRING

As The Election Approaches, "The Administration Is Mostly Playing For Time" On Its Foreign Policy Initiatives In The Middle East. "With the White House in campaign mode nearly 24/7, many of the administration's biggest foreign policy initiatives have been pushed to the back burner until after the election. From Syria and Iran to nuclear arms reductions and peace talks with the Taliban, the administration is mostly playing for time, trying to avoid decisions that could land the president in trouble or be exploited by his Republican challenger, Mitt Romney." (Mark Landler, "Obama, On The Trail, Plays For Time On Foreign Policy," [The New York Times](#), 7/20/12)

- **Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes: "The President Is, By Definition, Spending More Time On The Election."** "'The president is, by definition, spending more time on the election,' said Benjamin J. Rhodes, a deputy national security adviser, who worked on the 2008 campaign. 'But sometimes people paint with too broad a brush.'" (Mark Landler, "Obama, On The Trail, Plays For Time On Foreign Policy," [The New York Times](#), 7/20/12)

"Where, Then, Does A President Who Promised A New Approach To The Old Middle East And Ultimately Failed To Deliver Begin If He Wins A Second Term?" (Scott Wilson, "Where Obama Failed On Forging Peace In The Middle East," [The Washington Post](#), 7/14/12)