Trump Team Warns Obama Against Major Moves Against Israel at UN

November 11, 2016

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Israel Hayom

<http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=37919>

Reports surfaced last week, before the Nov. 8 elections, that outgoing U.S. President Barack Obama could be preparing an unpleasant surprise for Israel, most likely in the form of calling on the United Nations Security Council to recognize a Palestinian state.

Now, with Donald Trump set to step into the White House, his aides say Obama should not even think about taking such steps, according to American political website Politico.

"On big, transformative issues where President Obama and President-elect Trump are not in alignment, I don’t think it's in keeping with the spirit of the transition ... to try to push through agenda items that are contrary to the president-elect's positions," a Trump national security adviser told Politico on Thursday. "It's not going to be just counterproductive, but it will also send mixed messages."

He added: "The machinery of government is going to have to keep grinding as best it can. But Obama and his aides shouldn't go seeking new adventures or pushing through policies that clearly don't match Trump's positions."

Israel vehemently opposes any move by Obama to secure a U.N. Security Council resolution, which it views as hostile to Israeli interests, especially if he was to ask other world powers to embrace U.S.-drafted parameters for a two-state solution.

One Israeli official, who asked not be identified, told Politico that any such move would represent a "dagger in the heart" of the peace process -- perhaps forever.

Senior Trump adviser Jason Greenblatt, seeking to allay Israeli concerns, said: "With Trump, there won't be any coercion for negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. He thinks Israel is in a tough position, needs to defend itself and won't force a solution on Israel. Peace has to come from both sides. If Trump will have an idea that can contribute to the sides he will contribute it, but he doesn't intend to force a solution."

Greenblatt, who is also the executive vice president and chief legal officer at the Trump Organization, made the comments during an interview with Army Radio on Thursday.

He said Trump "does not define the settlements as an obstacle to peace, and as evidence of this he will present the situation in Gaza, where the Jewish communities were evacuated and yet peace still wasn't forthcoming. He does not see the settlements as an obstacle to peace."

Regarding Trump's comments that he would transfer the U.S. Embassy, currently located in Tel Aviv, to Jerusalem, Greenblatt said that "when Trump gives his word he stands by it. For Israel, he recognizes the right of Jewish nation to preside in its eternal capital of Jerusalem and is revolted by UNESCO's [decision](http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=37407) on the matter."

Asked whether Trump intends an Israel-related role for him, such as Middle East emissary, Greenblatt answered in Hebrew that such an appointment would be a "bracha" ["blessing"] and added, "It's too early to tell, but I very much hope so. It would be an honor and a privilege to serve in that capacity."

**'Maximum aid for Israel'**

During the election campaign, Greenblatt and David Friedman, Trump's adviser on Israel, formulated an official document stipulating that on the matter of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the U.S. is interested in coming to an agreement, but that "a two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians appears impossible as long as the Palestinians are unwilling to renounce violence against Israel or recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state.

"Additionally, the Palestinians are divided between PA rule in the West Bank and Hamas rule in Gaza, so there is not a united Palestinian people who could control a second state. Hamas is a U.S.-designated terrorist organization that actively seeks Israel's destruction. We will seek to assist the Israelis and the Palestinians in reaching a comprehensive and lasting peace, to be freely and fairly negotiated between those living in the region."

The document also states that "the Palestinian leadership, including the PA, has undermined any chance for peace with Israel by raising generations of Palestinian children on an educational program of hatred of Israel and Jews. The larger Palestinian society is regularly taught such hatred on Palestinian television, in the Palestinian press, in entertainment media, and in political and religious communications. The two major Palestinian political parties -- Hamas and Fatah -- regularly promote anti-Semitism and jihad.

"The U.S. cannot support the creation of a new state where terrorism is financially incentivized, terrorists are celebrated by political parties and government institutions, and the corrupt diversion of foreign aid is rampant. The U.S. should not support the creation of a state that forbids the presence of Christian or Jewish citizens, or that discriminates against people on the basis of religion."

Regarding Israel's future borders, the document specifies that "Israel's maintenance of defensible borders that preserve peace and promote stability in the region is a necessity. Pressure should not be put on Israel to withdraw to borders that make attacks and conflict more likely."

On the issue of the Jewish and Israeli connection to Jerusalem, the document states that "the U.S. will recognize Jerusalem as the eternal and indivisible capital of the Jewish state and [the Trump administration] will move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem."

Meanwhile, on the matter of the [Memorandum of Understanding](http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=36437) between Israel and the U.S. on defense aid for Israel, the document describes it is "a good first step, but there is much more to be done. A Trump administration will ensure that Israel receives maximum military, strategic and tactical cooperation from the United States, and the MOU will not limit the support that we give. Further, Congress will not be limited to give support greater than that provided by the MOU if it chooses to do so."

The U.S., according to the document, "should veto any United Nations votes that unfairly single out Israel and will work in international institutions and forums, including in our relations with the European Union, to oppose efforts to delegitimize Israel, impose discriminatory double standards against Israel, or to impose special labeling requirements on Israeli products or boycotts on Israeli goods.

"The U.S. should cut off funds for the U.N. Human Rights Council, a body dominated by countries presently run by dictatorships that seems solely devoted to slandering the Jewish state."

Regarding the anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanction movement, the document declares that the U.S. should view such efforts "as inherently anti-Semitic and take strong measures, both diplomatic and legislative, to thwart actions that are intended to limit commercial relations with Israel, or persons or entities doing business in Israeli areas, in a discriminatory manner."

On relations with Iran, the document states: "Despite the Iran nuclear deal in 2015, the U.S. State Department recently designated Iran, yet again, as the leading state sponsor of terrorism -- putting the Middle East particularly, but the whole world at risk by financing, arming, and training terrorist groups operating around the world including Hamas, Hezbollah, and forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The U.S. must counteract Iran's ongoing violations of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding Iran's quest for nuclear weapons and their noncompliance with past and present sanctions, as well as the agreements they signed, and implement tough, new sanctions when needed to protect the world and Iran's neighbors from its continuing nuclear and non-nuclear threats."

The document describes the relationship between Israel and the U.S. as an "unbreakable bond" that is "based upon shared values of democracy, freedom of speech, respect for minorities, cherishing life, and the opportunity for all citizens to pursue their dreams."

It continues: "Israel is the state of the Jewish people, who have lived in that land for 3,500 years. The State of Israel was founded with courage and determination by great men and women against enormous odds and is an inspiration to people everywhere who value freedom and human dignity.

"Israel is a staunch ally of the U.S. and a key partner in the global war against Islamic jihadism. Military cooperation and coordination between Israel and the U.S. must continue to grow."