



Hillary Clinton:

A long history of strong and steadfast leadership for the US-Israel relationship

Hillary Rodham Clinton bowed her head at the Western Wall on Thursday and then slipped a written prayer into a crack between the ancient limestone blocks of Judaism's holiest shrine. When she walked away from the Wall's roped off women's section, female worshipers next to her cheered. Mrs. Clinton waved, tapped her right hand on the left lapel of her yellow suit and said, smiling: "This is from the heart." [Associated Press 10/27/94]

From her first trip to Israel on New Year's Day in 1982 through her years as a U.S. Senator, Hillary Clinton has a **long history of strong and steadfast leadership** for the US-Israel relationship. Her connection to the State of Israel, which began when as the First Lady of Arkansas, she brought an innovative Israeli preschool education program to her state, has grown, and today, she stands as one of Israel's leading defenders and supporters in the United States Senate.

The importance of the US-Israel relationship:

Hillary Clinton has a deep and abiding commitment to a strong US-Israel relationship – one rooted in the shared tradition of open democracy, free expression, women's rights, the rule of law, and reinforced by our shared interest for peace, freedom, and prosperity. She believes that this unbreakable bond, which has been a hallmark of American foreign policy for more than 50 years, must continue to be the cornerstone of America's Middle East policy. Hillary recognizes that Israel is a most important strategic ally against the scourge of terrorism and radicalism. She has proven this commitment by consistently leading the way in support of legislation that strengthens this mutually-beneficial relationship. "Israel," she said, "is not only a friend and ally for us; it is a beacon of what democracy can and should be." [AIPAC 5/24/05]

Standing with Israel against terrorism:

Hillary Clinton believes that Israel's right to exist in safety as a Jewish state, with defensible borders and an undivided Jerusalem as its capital, secure from violence and terrorism, must never be questioned. Having visited Israel more than half a dozen times on both political and personal trips, Hillary has first-hand understanding of the challenges that Israel faces. "It is essential for those of us who care deeply about what is happening in and to Israel, to recognize that Israel's struggle is a struggle on behalf of a future where people will be able to live with peace and security." [AIPAC 2/1/07]. Hillary has consistently stood with Israel in its fight against terrorism. She was a strong supporter of Israel's right to build a security barrier and spoke out against the International Court of Justice for questioning Israel's right to do so. Hillary introduced legislation calling for the immediate release of the three Israeli soldiers being held captive by Hamas and Hezbollah and co-sponsored a resolution expressing support for Israel during last summer's war with Lebanon. As a co-sponsor of the Syria Accountability Act, Hillary also believes that the United States must pressure Syria for hosting, supporting and sponsoring international terrorist groups that threaten both US troops in the Middle East and our ally, Israel.

Stopping Iran's nuclear ambitions:

Hillary Clinton believes that Iran's nuclear pursuit, coupled with its leadership's despicable anti-Semitic rhetoric, require that the United States do everything it can to deny nuclear weapons to Iran. "U.S. policy must be clear and unequivocal. We cannot, we should not, we must not,

permit Iran to build or acquire nuclear weapons. And in dealing with this threat, as I have said for a very long time, no option can be taken off the table.” [Speech on the floor of Senate 2/14/07] Hillary has issued statements denouncing the Iranian President’s anti-Israel rhetoric and denial of the Holocaust, and called on Secretary Rice to place the United States at the forefront of delivering a strong, united, and unambiguous condemnation before the international community. Hillary believes that the United States should use every tool in its arsenal – from imposing economic sanctions to siphoning off funds for Iran’s nuclear program to initiating a process of direct engagement with Iran. Since she was elected to the Senate in 2000, Hillary has been a strong leader on legislative action aimed at mounting economic and political pressure on Iran through support of the Iran Counter-Proliferation Act and the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. Hillary also believes in pursuing vigorous diplomacy with Iran. Just as the US government was engaged in direct talks with the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War, so today should the US talk to Iran in order to gain valuable insight, intelligence and information about how to pressure its leadership to change course. But Hillary has said that as president she would not commit to personal meetings with leaders of rogue states, such as Iran. In dealing with our adversaries, she would plan carefully, and lay the groundwork, and make sure that we achieve meaningful progress as the most responsible way to enhance U.S. security.

Securing Magen David Adom’s acceptance into the International Committee of the Red

Cross:

Outraged by the exclusion of Magen David Adom from the International Red Cross, Hillary Clinton became a champion for MDA’s cause. She sponsored legislation that limited US contributions to the International Committee of the Red Cross until it recognized MDA, urged the Swiss government to find a solution that would bestow full participation for the MDA, and spoke out tirelessly on this issue. Finally in the summer of 2006, the ICRC righted this historic wrong and admitted MDA into the International Red Cross.

The leading voice against Anti-Semitism in Palestinian schools:

In 1999, Hillary first spoke out against the textbooks used in Palestinian schools, which reject Israel’s right to exist and describe Israel’s founding as “a catastrophe that is unprecedented in history.” Hillary has led the charge against this propaganda which she says indoctrinates instead of educates Palestinian children and actively prevents these young people from seeing Israel as a neighbor to live beside in peace. As a Senator, Hillary continued to emphasize this issue, most recently joining with Palestinian Media Watch in February 2007 to release a new report that exposed the continuing anti-Israel and anti-Semitic biases in Palestinian schoolbooks.

Rejecting Hamas:

The Hamas terror campaign has claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent civilians in Israel and as a co-sponsor of the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act in 2006, Hillary voted to prevent any U.S. foreign assistance to flow to a Palestinian government in which Hamas was a participant. Hillary believes that Hamas and indeed all Palestinian groups need to demonstrate clearly and unequivocally their commitment to peace by renouncing violence and terror, recognizing Israel’s right to exist, and complying with previously signed agreements.

Foreign aid to Israel:

Hillary Clinton has consistently supported the annual foreign aid bill which in 2007 for Israel contained \$2.34 billion in military aid, \$120 million for economic assistance, and \$40 million for refugee absorption. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Hillary also advocates for US-Israel defense and security cooperation and has met with Israeli leaders to discuss shared challenges and common interests.