



Historic U.S. Presidential Debate to be Held in Jerusalem

(September 20, 2008) In an historic first, the American Israeli Action Coalition (AIAC) has organized and is sponsoring a U.S. Presidential Style debate to be held in Jerusalem on Thursday evening, 25th September.

At the debate, Senator John McCain, the Republican Presidential nominee, will be represented by Marc Zell, co-chair of Republicans Abroad - Israel. Senator Barack Obama will be represented by Sheldon Schorer, counsel to Democrats Abroad - Israel. Harvey Schwartz, AIAC's Chairman, will act as Moderator.

"This is the first time that an event such as this has been held in Israel", said Schwartz. "It is truly an historic first".

"There are more than 250,000 Americans currently residing in Israel", continued Schwartz. "They are vitally interested in the upcoming U.S. election, which will be one of the most significant elections in recent memory. They recognize the impact which this election may have on U.S.-Israel relations".

Aaron Tirschwell, AIAC's Director, noted that "unlike Israeli law, American law permits American citizens residing anywhere in the world to vote by absentee ballot. The more than 250,000 American citizens in Israel come from many of the most important "swing" states - such as New York, New Jersey, Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and California - and, together with their friends, relatives and supporters in the United States, may have a significant impact on the outcome of the election".

"In order to make the debate as authentic and meaningful as possible, AIAC has drafted questions -many of which were suggested by its members - about matters relating to Israel and American society, which it has presented to Messrs. Zell and Schorer who, in turn, have forwarded them to the candidates for their responses", Schwartz stated. "At the debate, it is anticipated that Zell and Schorer will report their respective candidate's actual responses to those questions. Thus, it will be as close as possible to having Sens. Obama and McCain actually present and answering questions in person at the debate. This is a further historic innovation to this format".

As a further innovation, questions from audience members will be entertained.

The debate will take place on Thursday, September 25, 2008 at 7:30 PM (doors open at 6:45 PM) at Heichal Shlomo, 58 King George Street, Jerusalem. "The auditorium can seat approximately 1,000 people", noted Tirschwell. "Early indications are that there should be a full house, so people are encouraged to come early".

AIAC Chairman Schwartz noted that Senators McCain and Obama will hold their first debate in the U.S. the next day, September 26. "It is significant that under our format, Israelis will have an opportunity to hear the candidates' positions a full day before the American electorate does", he said.

At the location, Americans who have not yet done so will have an opportunity to register for absentee ballots, in an effort which AIAC is sponsoring in cooperation with www.votefromisrael.org.

AIAC is a non-partisan, non-political, issue-oriented NGO which is devoted to effectively recruiting and activating the more than 250,000 expatriate American citizens living in Israel in order to create a united voice that will be heard by the governments of the United States and Israel on issues that pertain to the continued safety and security of Israel and the Jewish people worldwide.

www.aiacoalition.org

Venue: Heichal Shlomo, 58 King George St., Jerusalem

Date: Thursday, September 25th 2008, at 7:30 PM (doors open at 6:45PM)

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For additional information, or if you would like to RSVP, please contact:

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