



AMERICAN ISRAEL ACTION COALITION

REMARKS FROM THE COALITION FOR A UNITED JERUSALEM PRESS CONFERENCE, JULY 22, 2008 – ELDAN HOTEL, JERUSALEM ISRAEL

As American citizens living in Israel, we extend a warm welcome to Senator Barack Obama and his two traveling companions, Senators Reed and Hagel, on their current visit to Jerusalem, the eternal and undivided capital of the Jewish State of Israel.

We want to state from the outset that we are not here to endorse or criticize any candidate. What we are here for is to call upon Senator Obama, as the presumptive Democratic Party candidate for President of the United States, to state in clear and unequivocal terms that he recognizes that Jerusalem is and shall for all time remain the exclusive and undivided capital of the Jewish State of Israel. And, if he is elected as President, that that will be the unalterable position of his administration.

A little historical perspective is in order:

In 2000, during a failed run for the House, then State Senator Obama stated “Jerusalem should remain united AND should be recognized as Israel’s capital.”

In January 2008 Senator Obama answered an American Jewish Committee question posted on their website: “How do you see the likely final status of Jerusalem?” with the following response and I quote: Jerusalem WILL remain Israel’s capital, and no one should want or expect it to be re-divided.”

At the recent AIPAC Policy Conference in Washington, DC, to rousing applause and a standing ovation, Senator Obama reiterated and I quote, “Jerusalem will remain the capital of Israel, AND it **must** remain undivided.”

While these statements are clear, Senator Obama recently appeared to muddy the waters during his recent interview with Fareed Zakaria on CNN when he said that his AIPAC statement “had some poor phrasing” and he should have been more “careful in terms of our syntax.” This apparent backtracking is highly troubling to the more than 250,000 American citizens living in Israel.

The Coalition for a United Jerusalem calls on Senator Obama to:

Join the Coalition: visit www.aiacoalition.org and sign up today!

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- Reaffirm his positive remarks at the AIPAC Policy Conference regarding the need to insure that Jerusalem remain the undivided Capital of Israel.
- Disavow subsequent retractions which qualified his original calls for an undivided Jerusalem to mean only that it would not be separated by barbed wire as in 1948-67.
- Declare that security and access to all holy places can only be guaranteed by Israeli sovereignty and administration as demonstrated during the past 41 years.
- Acknowledge that Israeli withdrawals from southern Lebanon and Gaza in the past have led to destabilization and increased violence and terror, and that these withdrawals presage a similar deterioration likely to occur in eastern Jerusalem if Israel were to withdraw and turn the area over to Fatah, which would likely be usurped by Hamas.
- Take immediate steps to introduce a more balanced and a pro-Israel perspective by appointing a number of foreign policy advisors who are more likely to consider an undivided Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty or meet with leadership and representatives from our organizations so we can offer a different perspective. Past and present, formal and informal advisors, such as Zbigniew and Mark Brzezinski, Samantha Powers, Robert Malley, Susan Rice, Merrill McPeak, Anthony Lake, David Bonior, Ivo Daalder, Scott Lasensky, Dan Kurtzer, Joseph Cirincione along with current traveling companion Senator Chuck Hagel offer an extremely one-sided “pressure Israel” view which should be mitigated by advisors who are not predisposed to reject the possibility of a unified Jerusalem as Israel’s capital.

If there is one word that encapsulates Senator Obama’s campaign it is ‘Change.’ Senator Obama is certainly permitted to change his mind and if he has in fact done so, he is duty bound to state so in clear and accurate terms so that the American electorate has a full understanding of his position on this most significant issue.

The Coalition for a United Jerusalem, comprised of the **American Israeli Action Coalition**, the **Council of Young Israel Rabbis in Israel**, **Emunah Women**, the **Rabbinical Council of America in Israel**, the **Worldwide Young Israel Movement**, and the **Zionist Organization of America**, serves to highlight the views of some of the major American/Israeli organizations and

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dual American/Israeli voting citizens living in Israel. The Coalition aims to voice their deep concern over the future of the historical capital of Israel and the Jewish people.

AIAC: American Israeli Action Coalition: Harvey Schwartz, Chairman

Council of Young Israel Rabbis in Israel: Rabbi Jeffrey Bienenfeld, President

Eemunah Women: Toby Willig, Member, Board of Directors

Rabbinical Council of America in Israel: Rabbi Aaron Borow, President

Worldwide Young Israel Movement: Rabbi Aaron S. Tirschwell, Director of Israel Operations

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