



Pro-Israel Leaders on the Obama Administration's Approach To the Gaza Flotilla Incident

Since last week's confrontation between Israeli Defense Forces and hostile activists aboard the Mavi Marmara flotilla, Israeli and American officials along with Jewish communal leaders have praised the Obama Administration's handling of the incident. Below are some of their statements along with excerpts from various news reports:

Michael B. Oren, Israel's Ambassador to the United States:

"... our relationship with the Obama administration throughout this episode has been very close and very cooperative and very open. We are discussing ways in which we can address this very complex Gaza situation."

...

"And I'll say personally throughout this entire episode, days of work with the administration, I never heard one word of criticism, not one rancorous comment at all."

- *Fox News Sunday*, June 7, 2010

"Oren gave the Obama administration's response to the flotilla crisis a grade of 'overall, good.' Earlier, he spoke with Tony Blinken, national security adviser to Vice President Joe Biden, who strongly defended Israel's right to check for contraband heading into Gaza. 'It's just what we need to hear, that the United States stand by Israel in its fight against Hamas,' Oren said."

- AOL News, June 3, 2010

Mark Regev, Spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Affairs Ministry:

"We'd like to express our thanks to the United States that worked behind the scenes to water down the [statement] at the United Nations."

- *Foreign Policy*, June 1, 2010

David Harris, Executive Director, and Robert Elman, President, American Jewish Committee:

“We write to express our gratitude for America’s solidarity with Israel in the aftermath of the Gaza Flotilla incident – and for your leadership in employing the tools of American diplomacy to defend Israel’s right to protect its citizens as it pursues peace with the Palestinians.”

...

“Throughout this week, we ... have been full of admiration for the U.S. diplomatic effort, under your direction, to restrain those governments that have sought punitive actions against Israel. In particular, we recognize the decisive American impact on the UN Security Council presidential statement issued early Tuesday, and the vote cast in opposition to the UN Human Rights Council resolution authorizing a predictably biased inquiry into the incident at sea.”

- Letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, June 4, 2010

Martin Indyk, Former United States Ambassador to Israel:

“In the last few days, Obama and Netanyahu have been working much more closely together than they ever did in the past. The crisis has thrown them into a good deal of telephone conversations and efforts to try to deal with the situation. That may actually serve to ... strengthen their relationship rather than weaken it.”

- Interview with *Der Spiegel*, June 7, 2010

***Politico*:**

“...With much of the world expressing fury over the raid, the contrast with Washington’s ... response could not have been more striking.

‘The situation is that they’re [Israel] so isolated right now that it’s not only that we’re the only ones who will stick up for them,’ said an American official. ‘We’re the only ones who believe them — and what they’re saying is true.’”

- June 1, 2010

Sources:

AOL News. “Israel's Ambassador: ‘The Sea Cannot Be Opened’.” June 3, 2010. <http://tinyurl.com/2339y7b>

Der Spiegel. “Obama Must Change the Subject from Gaza to Peacemaking.” June 7, 2010. <http://tinyurl.com/2b3cld6>

Elman, Robert and David Harris. “AJC Praises Clinton's Defense of Israel.” American Jewish Committee. June 4, 2010. <http://tinyurl.com/2asuxyt>

Foreign Policy. “U.S., Israeli Officials Scramble to Contain Blowback from Flotilla Raid. June 1, 2010. <http://tinyurl.com/256tqww>

Fox News Sunday. “Transcript: Amb. Michael Oren on ‘FNS’.” June 7, 2010. <http://tinyurl.com/2eqo5tx>

Politico. “We're the only ones who believe them.” June 1, 2010. <http://tinyurl.com/2fw75ha>