

Benjamin Netanyahu Scores Commitments From Both President Trump and Vice President Pence

What a difference eight years can make.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was caught smiling numerous times during his visits around Washington, D.C., this week. But perhaps no more widely than after he met with President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, respectively, on Wednesday and Thursday.

The White House released “readouts” of those meetings that provide some insight into the topics that were discussed and where the U.S. and Israel stand on the various issues.

From the meeting between Netanyahu and the president:

President Donald J. Trump welcomed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the Oval Office and reaffirmed the special relationship and unbreakable bond between the United States and Israel. The tremendous strength of the United States-Israel relationship is reflected in the close partnership between our governments, and also in the ties that connect the peoples of Israel and the United States. Our deep-rooted political, military, economic and social ties reflect our shared values, strategic interests, and dynamic economic and trade relationship.

In today’s meeting, President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu agreed that there will be no daylight between the United States and Israel. The president underscored the United States’ unwavering commitment to Israel’s security, and that his administration will safeguard and strengthen

the overall security relationship. The president and prime minister agreed on the need to counter the threats posed by Iran and its proxies, in addition to countering the so-called "Islamic State" and other radical Islamic terrorist groups, so as to create a more secure Middle East to the benefit of all countries. The two leaders agreed that the Iran nuclear deal is a terrible deal for the United States, Israel and the world. The president assured the prime minister that Iran must not, and will not, obtain nuclear weapons capability. The two leaders also discussed the crisis in Syria and other regional issues. The United States and Israel stand together facing a range of challenges, and the two leaders pledged to deepen cooperation to bring greater peace and stability to the Middle East and to protect the United States, Israel and other nations from the global threat of terrorism.

President Trump reiterated his desire for peace throughout the Middle East and for reaching a comprehensive agreement that would end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The president and prime minister agreed that peace between Israel and the Palestinians can only be negotiated directly between the two parties, and that the United States will work closely with Israel and the Palestinians to make progress toward that goal. The two leaders discussed the issue of Israeli settlement construction and agreed to continue those discussions and to work out an approach that is consistent with the goal of advancing peace and security.

President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu agreed on their mutual goal of making the United States-Israel relationship even closer as both countries pursue shared interests in the region. The two leaders have directed their respective teams to form joint working groups in the months ahead to dramatically improve bilateral relations in a number of areas, including cyber, intelligence, security, trade, technology, countering the threats posed by Iran and other

actors and promoting Arab-Israeli cooperation, including economic cooperation. A working group will also focus on enabling the growth of the Palestinian economy.

It is a new day for the United States-Israel relationship, defined by a responsible approach to the challenges and opportunities our two countries face in the Middle East.

From the meeting between the prime minister and vice president:

Vice President Mike Pence hosted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for breakfast at the Vice President's Residence at the Naval Observatory. The two leaders reaffirmed the special relationship between the United States and Israel and underscored the unbreakable bond between our two countries. The Vice President reiterated the United States' unwavering commitment to Israel's security and pledged to work with Prime Minister Netanyahu to address the shared challenges we face throughout the Middle East, including the threats posed by Iran and its proxies as well as ISIS and other radical Islamic terrorist organizations. The two leaders discussed ways that the United States and Israel can work more closely together on critical issues such as cyber security, intelligence cooperation and energy. They also agreed to work together against one-sided actions against Israel at the United Nations and other international forums, as well as boycotts that target Israel. The Vice President and the Prime Minister agreed that peace between Israel and the Palestinians can only be negotiated directly between the two parties, and that the United States will work closely with Israel and the Palestinians to make progress towards that goal.

It's clear from both meetings that both the Trump administration and the Israeli government are both eager to restore the bilateral relationship between their countries. That's good news for both the U.S. and Israel. {eo}