

Israeli Heads React to America's Choice of Donald Trump

In the aftermath of American's choice of Donald J. Trump as its 45th president, many Israeli leaders have had something to say about it.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hailed Trump's victory by calling him "my friend." After offering congratulations, he added, "You are a great friend of Israel. ... I look forward to working with you to advance security, prosperity and peace."

Netanyahu's congratulations were quickly followed up by a phone call by Trump to the prime minister's office, inviting him to meet in the U.S. "at the first opportunity." The alacrity of Trump's response may be the first solid indicator that Trump is serious about restoring camaraderie between the White House and Jerusalem, signaling a spring-like change in atmosphere that became cold under the administration of President Barack Obama.

In fact, shortly after Trump's call, Israel's Foreign Ministry confirmed the conversation, characterizing it as "warm and heartfelt."

Following a *mazel tov* by Reuven Rivlin, Israel's president added, "There are many challenges that lie before you as president—at home and around the world. Israel, your greatest ally, stands by you as your friend and partner in turning those challenges into opportunities."

The opposition leader in Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, sent his regards via Facebook: "American democracy today elected a leader who surprised the pundits, and showed that we are in an era of change and new direction. You did the

unexpected, against all odds,” wrote Isaac Herzog.

Jerusalem’s mayor, Nir Barkat, sent Trump a letter that included a hand-written “Mazal tov, Mr. President!” In the body of the letter, he added, “I am confident that you will continue to empower our city by reaffirming its sovereignty and moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem.”

Israel’s Minister of Education is Naftali Bennett. His right-wing party, Jewish Home, is a member of Netanyahu’s coalition government. Bennett is also a consistent bur in Netanyahu’s saddle, hoping to eventually unseat him and take his place.

“Trump’s victory,” he tweeted, “is an opportunity for Israel to immediately retract the notion of a Palestinian state in the center of the country, which would hurt our security and just cause.”

For his part, Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, sent a cable. Its generic expression for a “just and comprehensive peace in the region” came in the sharper context of a statement earlier in the day by his spokesman, Nabil Abu Rudeinah.

“We will work with any president the American people elect to achieve peace in the Middle East,” he said, but with a condition. The offer of work with “any president of the American people” is “on the basis of the two-state solution along 1967 borders with east Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine.” {eo}

Brian Schrauger is the editor-in-chief of the Jerusalem Journal.

For the original article, visit .