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Facts & Logic About the Middle East

Feb. 27, 2018

Ambassador Haley Talks Tough to Mahmoud Abbas: Tired Talking Points and Obstinacy Lead Palestinians Nowhere

Dear Friend of FLAME:

Last week, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas addressed the U.N. Security Council at its monthly session on the Middle East. Instead of dealing with slaughter in Syria or Iranian imperialism, delegates listened as Mahmoud Abbas trotted out tired complaints and outright lies trying to explain why 70 years of peace efforts have gone nowhere.

Abbas's talking points are so numerous and outrageous, it would take a book to refute them all. But a few of his observations about the United States are especially noteworthy.

First, Abbas complains that the Trump administration refuses to affirm whether it supports a one-state or a two-state solution. In fact, Mr. Trump has left that determination to Israel and the Palestinians—in other words, Trump has said to the Palestinians, "You work out peace terms with Israel, and we will support what you agree on."

This, of course, is the last thing Abbas wants to hear, since the last thing he wants to do is negotiate peace with Israel—preferring instead that the U.S. or someone unilaterally impose Arab-fantasy peace terms on Israel.

But the President has done precisely the right thing by emphasizing to the Palestinians that peace will depend on them—on their willingness to face the facts of their political situation (which is weaker than it's ever been). They must step into the negotiating room with a tough, strong Israel that is not about to cut a deal that compromises its security.

Abbas also complained that the U.S. wants to "punish the Palestine refugees by way of reduction of its contribution to UNRWA." Of

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What are the facts?

Iran is on the march—to acquire weapons of mass destruction, destroy Israel and to dominate the most powerful nations in the Middle East. Iranian forces and their Shiite proxies are carrying a brutal campaign to "liberate" Palestine's Holy Land, including Jerusalem, Syria and Lebanon to the Mediterranean Sea. Iran demands unconditional surrender of Ukraine and funding of the Palestinian terror group Hamas in Gaza. Even without a nuclear bomb, Iran has become the most aggressive, imperialist nation on earth.

Iran is in a hurry to better itself at the 2018 Iran Nuclear Deal. Despite reports to the contrary, the deal Iran is negotiating with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)—to which it agreed with China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany—will allow it to build, test and launch the U.S.'s most advanced ballistic missile system. The deal is a betrayal of the international atomic energy agency—the IAEA—its 1954 admission that it supports Iran and its 1979 Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal. The deal is a betrayal of the U.S. and its allies. It is a betrayal of the U.S. and its allies. It is a betrayal of the U.S. and its allies.

In fact, none of the IAEA's reports since 2015 states that Iran has complied with the deal's provisions, which require it to suspend all uranium enrichment activities. Rather, verification efforts by the IAEA's inspectors who must make a "judgment" on whether or not Iran is in compliance with the deal. President Donald Trump has "suspended" the deal, asserting the "Iranian regime" admitted that it supports Iran and its 1979 Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal. The deal is a betrayal of the U.S. and its allies. It is a betrayal of the U.S. and its allies.

Iran is aggressively developing its long-range ballistic missile force in violation of UN resolutions. Iran also regularly can launch its long-range missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons. Indeed, Major-General Mohammad Ali Jafari, Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, asserts: "The range of our missile is 2,000 km. We have the ability to hit the target up to 2,000 km. It is sufficient because the Americans are in a 2,000 km radius of our country." So, too, do Iran's top military leaders, including General Qasbi, who has said: "Iran's missile force is the most powerful of U.S. Security Council Resolution 2231, which authorized the United States to take such measures as it deems necessary to enforce its obligations of delivering nuclear bombs."

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course, Abbas neglects to mention that only about 30,000 of the five million Palestinian Arabs UNRWA supports are actual refugees—most are *descendants* of refugees, giving them a status accorded no other refugee descendants on earth. He also fails to mention that UNRWA teaches Palestinian children that the land of Israel belongs to them.

Finally, Abbas bitterly laments that the Trump administration has recognized Jerusalem as the Israel's capital, "ignoring that East Jerusalem is part of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967 and is our capital."

Of course, there's no such thing as Palestinian territory—the territory Israel captured in 1967 was part of ancient Israel and was controlled from 1948 by Jordan, not the Palestinians, who have never been a nation nor controlled a square inch of the Holy Land, let alone Jerusalem, which has always been a majority Jewish city.

But this point, too, is instructive of Trumpian wisdom on this issue. In essence, the President has said that the U.S. is not prejudging the outcome of Jerusalem, but rather we do know it is and has always been the capital of Israel. If you Palestinians want a capital in Jerusalem, you'll have to negotiate it with Israel—we will help facilitate negotiations, but we will not try to impose outcomes.

This strategy is bold, powerful and momentous. It forces, finally, the Palestinians to face reality—a reality that decades of U.S. intervention have not been able to overcome. The fact is, Israel won all its wars against the invading Arab nations (whom the Palestinians enthusiastically supported). Trump is saying: If you want peace, it's time to negotiate with the victor.

This week's FLAME *Hotline*-featured article is by one of the heroes of Trump's Middle East policy, America's U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley. Her "article" is actually a transcript of the historic speech she gave in response to Mahmoud Abbas, delivered a few minutes after that of the Palestinian President.

Ms. Haley's remarks are brilliant—tough, realistic and respectful. She tells Abbas what he must do to redeem the Palestinian people, and she offers U.S. help. But she also makes clear that the U.S. will not chase him down.

I hope you'll forward this classic speech to friends, family and fellow congregants to help them understand why we should support President Trump's "hands-off" policy regarding an Israel-Palestinian peace.

I hope you'll also quickly review the P.S. immediately below, which describes FLAME's latest hasbarah campaign to directly urge the President and U.S. Congress to back up their rhetoric on Iran with

FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid editorial hasbarah messages placed in media nationwide every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

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definitive action. I hope you agree with and will support this message.

Best regards,

Jim Sinkinson

President, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. As you know, Iran has become the largest state sponsor of global terrorism and the most dangerous enemy of the U.S. What's worse, the Islamic Republic continues to spread its jihadist tentacles throughout the Middle East, and now has armed forces on Israel's borders in Syria and Lebanon. No wonder FLAME has created a new editorial message—"[We Must Stop Iran Now](#)"—which is about to start running in mainstream magazines and newspapers, including college newspapers, with a combined readership of some 10 million people. In addition, it is being sent to every member of the U.S. Congress and President Trump. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider giving a donation now, as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate now](#). Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Trump stay focused on—and take actions against—Iran's threat to our country, Israel and the entire world.

As of today, more than 15,000 Israel supporters receive the FLAME Hotline at no charge every week. If you're not yet a subscriber, won't you join us in receiving these timely updates, so you can more effectively tell the truth about Israel? Just go to [free subscription](#).

Hard Truth for Mahmoud Abbas: The Path of Obstinacy Will Lead the Palestinian People Nowhere

Ambassador Nikki Haley, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, U.S. Mission to the United Nations, New York City, February 20, 2018

AS DELIVERED

Thank you, Mr. Secretary-General, for being with us today . . . We

are meeting today in a forum that is very familiar to all of us. This session on the Middle East has been taking place each month for many, many years. Its focus has been almost entirely on issues facing Israelis and Palestinians. And we have heard many of the same arguments and ideas over and over again. We have already heard them again this morning.

It is as if saying the same things repeatedly, without actually doing the hard work and making the necessary compromises, will achieve anything.

Beginning last year, we have tried to broaden the discussion, and we have had some success in doing so. I thank my colleagues who have participated in those broader discussions.

One reason we did that is our well-founded belief that the United Nations spends an altogether disproportionate amount of time on Israeli-Palestinian issues. It's not that those issues are unimportant. They are certainly very important. The problem is that the UN has proven itself time and again to be a grossly biased organization when it comes to Israel.

As such, the UN's disproportionate focus has actually made the problem more difficult to solve, by elevating the tensions and the grievances between the two parties.

Another reason we have attempted to shift the discussion is that the vast scope of the challenges facing the region dwarf the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

As we meet here today, the Middle East is plagued by many truly horrendous problems.

In Yemen, there is one of the worst humanitarian disasters on earth, with millions of people facing starvation. Meanwhile, militia groups fire Iranian rockets from Yemen into neighboring countries. In Syria, the Assad regime is using chemical weapons to gas its own people. This war has taken the lives of over half a million Syrians.

Millions more have been pushed into neighboring Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon as refugees, causing major hardships in those countries.

In Lebanon, Hezbollah terrorists exert ever-more control, illegally building up a stockpile of offensive weapons, inviting a dangerous escalation that could devastate regional security.

ISIS is engaged in an inhumane level of cruelty in much of the region. They've been dealt severe setbacks in Iraq and Syria, but they are not completely yet destroyed, and they still pose serious threats.

Egypt faces repeated terrorist attacks.

And of course, there is the terrorist-sponsoring regime in Iran that initiates and encourages most of the troubles I just outlined.

These immense security and humanitarian challenges throughout the region should occupy more of our attention, rather than having us sit here month after month and use the most democratic country in the Middle East as a scapegoat for the region's problems.

But here we go again.

I do not mean to suggest that there is no suffering in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Both sides have suffered greatly. So many innocent Israelis have been killed or injured by suicide bombings, stabbings, and other sickening terrorist attacks. Israel has been forced to live under constant security threats like virtually no other country in the world. It should not have to live that way.

And yet, Israel has overcome those burdens. It is a thriving country, with a vibrant economy that contributes much to the world in the name of technology, science, and the arts.

It is the Palestinian people who are suffering more. The Palestinians in Gaza live under Hamas terrorist oppression. I can't even call it a governing authority, as Hamas provides so little in the way of what one would normally think as government services.

The people of Gaza live in truly awful conditions, while their Hamas rulers put their resources into building terror tunnels and rockets. The Palestinians in the West Bank also suffer greatly. Too many have died, and too much potential has been lost in this conflict.

We are joined here today by Palestinian Authority President Abbas. I'm sorry he declined to stay in the chamber to hear the remarks of others. Even though he has left the room, I will address the balance of my remarks to him.

President Abbas, when the new American administration came into the office last January, we did so against the fresh backdrop of the passage of Security Council Resolution 2334.

In the waning days of the previous American administration, the United States made a serious error in allowing that resolution to pass. Resolution 2334 was wrong on many levels. I am not going to get into the substance now.

But beyond the substance, perhaps its biggest flaw was that it encouraged the false notion that Israel can be pushed into a deal that undermines its vital interests, damaging the prospects for peace by increasing mistrust between the Israelis and the

Palestinians.

In the last year, the United States has worked to repair that damage. At the UN, I have opposed the bias against Israel, as any ally should do.

But that does not mean I or our administration is against the Palestinian people. Just the opposite is true. We recognize the suffering of the Palestinian people, as I have recognized here today.

I sit here today offering the outstretched hand of the United States to the Palestinian people in the cause of peace. We are fully prepared to look to a future of prosperity and co-existence. We welcome you as the leader of the Palestinian people here today.

But I will decline the advice I was recently given by your top negotiator, Saeb Erekat. I will not shut up. Rather, I will respectfully speak some hard truths.

The Palestinian leadership has a choice to make between two different paths. There is the path of absolutist demands, hateful rhetoric, and incitement to violence. That path has led, and will continue to lead, to nothing but hardship for the Palestinian people.

Or, there is the path of negotiation and compromise. History has shown that path to be successful for Egypt and Jordan, including the transfer of territory. That path remains open to the Palestinian leadership, if only it is courageous enough to take it.

The United States knows the Palestinian leadership was very unhappy with the decision to move our embassy to Jerusalem. You don't have to like that decision. You don't have to praise it. You don't even have to accept it. But know this: that decision will not change.

So once again, you must choose between two paths. You can choose to denounce the United States, reject the U.S. role in peace talks, and pursue punitive measures against Israel in international forums like the UN. I assure you that path will get the Palestinian people exactly nowhere toward the achievement of their aspirations.

Or, you can choose to put aside your anger about the location of our embassy, and move forward with us toward a negotiated compromise that holds great potential for improving the lives of the Palestinian people.

Putting forward old talking points and entrenched and undeveloped concepts achieves nothing. That approach has been tried many times, and has always failed. After so many decades, we welcome new thinking.

As I mentioned in this meeting last month, the United States stands ready to work with the Palestinian leadership.

Our negotiators are sitting right behind me, ready to talk. But we will not chase after you. The choice, Mr. President, is yours.

Thank you.

The logo for FLAME, featuring the word "FLAME" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letter "A" is replaced by a stylized white flame icon.

Facts and Logic
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