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In Iran negotiations, U.S. needs to treat Israel as an ally—not as a client state

Dear Friend of FLAME:

Virtually every talking point that emerges from meetings between Israeli and American officials and diplomats evokes the term “shared interests.” But in its single-minded determination to forge a new Iran deal, the U.S. seems to be ignoring the life-or-death stakes for its ally, Israel.

Apparently, President Biden believes Israel should hold its fire against Iran while the U.S. tries to negotiate an agreement. However, so far it seems the U.S. will not attempt to force Iran to a) abandon its nuclear weapons program, b) cease its threats and attacks against Israel and Arab Gulf states, and c) discontinue its arming and funding of Middle East terror groups like Hizbollah, Hamas and Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Last week, Israel's Mossad intelligence chief Yossi Cohen met with Mr. Biden in Washington to share reports about Iran's misdeeds and convince the President to take a tougher stand. He also emphasized that Israel's defensive actions against its sworn enemy will not be limited by the Islamic Republic's agreements with other nations, including the U.S.

Unfortunately, it appears that nothing the Israelis could say would change the direction the U.S. is taking toward Iran. When White House press secretary, Jen Psaki, was asked whether the Israeli delegation is likely to alter the administration's position. "No," she answered.

Psaki rarely makes unequivocal statements, preferring diplomatic language to avoid definitive declarations—so her firm response on this issue was telling.

Of course, it's no surprise that the U.S. and Israel have been such solid allies over the past three decades. The two nations, each built on a bedrock commitment to democracy and freedom, share the same threats and enemies. Those who target Israel generally oppose the U.S., and vice versa.

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Of course, the U.S. is in a different league in size and capacity, but the State of Israel punches far above its weight in terms of intelligence, military technology and as a base of stability in a key region.

With one of the most powerful militaries in the world, Israel defends Western interests on the ground in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Iran—so the U.S. and Western European countries don't have to. Israel backs the U.S. in the global forums more consistently than any other nation. It has saved many American and European lives and has never asked a single non-Israeli to fight its battles or wars.

Unfortunately, in recent years, we have seen this strong, mutually valuable alliance between the U.S. and Israel devolve into a relationship more akin to a "controlling" and a "client" state. Nowhere is this shift seen more clearly than with the Iran nuclear issue.

During President Barack Obama's administration, Israel was denied details on U.S. intentions to broker a deal to delay Iran's nuclear weapons program. While senior Israeli officials were briefed occasionally on the larger picture, White House National Security Adviser Susan Rice did not authorize the Israelis to be briefed on actual negotiations, leaving them in the dark, with little access to express concern about Iran's treachery.

Obviously, Israel has much to fear from a nation whose leaders constantly call for its annihilation, while simultaneously seeking nuclear weapons. Even back in 2015, when President Obama negotiated the ill-starred Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Israeli leaders believed the U.S. was striking a bad deal—relieving pressure and sanctions on a bellicose Iran and leaving no leverage to strike a better deal.

Today, it's easy to see the failure of the JCPOA: Iran has been working steadily on its nuclear capability since 2015 and is now a threshold nuclear state, barely months away from the ability to make a nuclear weapon. To its credit, the Trump administration utilized the mechanisms of the JCPOA that specified penalties for Iranian breaches: The U.S. reimposed crippling sanctions and left the agreement.

Now, to Israel's dismay, President Biden—surrounded by many of the JCPOA's greatest cheerleaders—has demonstrated unseemly eagerness to return to the agreement with few demands on the ayatollahs. This avid desire has merely emboldened Iranian leaders to enrich its uranium to 60% purity, just a small step from weapons-grade capability.

Even if an agreement pushes Iran back a few steps, this nuclear technology leap has been made. While the centrifuges may be sent into storage, Iranian enrichment skills and knowledge cannot be.

Understandably, the Israelis are livid about this situation and are trying to make the strongest, most robust case possible to the U.S. about its concerns.

Predictably, however, the JCPOA's supporters in the media mounted a preemptive strike on the Israelis' meetings with the President and Israel's

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shadow war against the nuclear weapons infrastructure. A *Washington Post* editorial warned that “Israel’s relentless attacks on Iran may endanger Biden’s diplomacy.”

The *Post* and other media characterize Biden’s diplomacy with Iran as the utmost virtue, while accusing Israel of trying to scupper good-faith negotiations. To this end, the paper’s editorial offers only a scant five words about Iran’s attacks against American allies and the U.S. itself. In the *Post*’s eyes, anybody who rains on Biden’s appeasement efforts is painted as a spoiler, worthy of scolding.

The *Post* should recall a famous incident that Joe Biden no doubt remembers well. In 1982, young Senator Biden in a Senate Foreign Relations Committee session confronted Israel’s 68-year-old Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Biden pounded the table, attempting to upbraid Begin on Israel’s settlements policy, warning that Begin was endangering support for U.S. aid.

“Don’t threaten us with cutting off aid to give up our principles,” Begin replied. “I am a proud Jew with 3,700 years of civilized history. Nobody came to our aid when we were dying in the gas chambers and ovens. Nobody came to our aid when we were striving to create our country. We paid for it. We fought for it. We died for it. We will stand by our principles.”

I hope you will point out to friends, family, colleagues, your elected representatives—and to Mr. Biden himself—that Israel’s efforts to resist the Islamic Republic are necessary and immensely valuable. Best of all, they increase U.S. leverage in negotiations. We can also hope the President will use that leverage to make an agreement powerful enough to truly protect U.S. lives, assets and allies from Iran.

In the meantime, Mr. Biden should not expect Israel to compromise its existential interests—its survival—in the face of an implacable, increasingly powerful enemy.

I hope you’ll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME’s lively [Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME’s new hasbarah campaign—which exposes the dangerous folly of the U.S. trying to entice Iran back into the failed “Iran Deal” of 2015.

Best regards,

Jim Sinkinson

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

P.S. The Biden administration and many members of Congress seem determined to reengage with Iran over the coming year—and some reports indicate a willingness to return to the failed “Iran Nuclear Deal” without preconditions. As you know, this would be disastrous—for the U.S. and for Israel and our other allies in the Middle East. The Iran Deal gave the Islamic Republic a roadmap to nuclear weapons and did nothing to check their jihadi activities, including development of long-

range ballistic missiles. To warn Americans of this danger, FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called “[No Fool’s Deal with Iran](#).” I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which ran in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, and other media nationwide. It spells out specifically the protections any new Iran deal must provide. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. 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 Biden stay committed to realistic policies in relation to Iran, Israel and the entire Middle East.

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