

**A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF BARACK OBAMA'S SPEECHES  
VIS-A-VIS MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

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## Abstract

*When situations demand people (politicians) to grab to the “pro-one” of the mass and to their ideology, political discourse dialectically articulated can be a vehicle towards achieving that ultimate end. The adequate exploitation of language manipulation politics could grant a political benefit and firmly control (regulate) people against their interests (Machiavellianism) or totally emancipate to be vibrant citizens in their own. A Critical Discourse Analysis of President Barack Hussein Obama’s Speeches regarding the Middle East and (North) Africa suffice these arguments. The findings revealed that the manacling West’s political ideology sleeplessly aspires to safeguard the interests of America and her ‘true’ allies to sustain their world power and to suppress the “others” in the counterfeit names of “tolerance”, “engagement”, “aid and support”, “democracy and freedom”, “globalization”, “knowledge-driven economy”, “peace and security”, etc that targets on the young generation. Such and so contemporary pretexts and extensions of interventions have been done with left-hands to take and eat in right-hands which have been silently token with mighty sticks.*

**Key Words:** *discourse, power & hegemony, regulation & emancipation, representation, ideology, operationalisation, allay, emergence, engagement. new.*

## Key to Some Acronyms

- BOE-X: – Paragraph Number of Barack Obama’s Speech at Egypt, Cairo
- BO-USPMENA-X: – Paragraph Number of Barack Obama’s Speech on US Policy in the Middle East and North Africa at Washington, DC.
- BO-AIPAC-X: – Paragraph Number of Barack Obama’s Speech to American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) at Washington, DC
- BO-YIJ-X: – Paragraph Number of Barack Obama’s Speech during his 2103 trip to Israel at Jerusalem International Convention Centre (Jerusalem).
- CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis

## **1. A Brief Introduction on Critical Discourse Analysis**

To begin with, Critical Discourse Analysis (which onwards, CDA), as a newly emerging, flourishing and overriding school of discourse, is a “transdisciplinary approach” to the study of discourse and discourse analysis, which views "language as a form of social practice" (Fairclough, 1989) and focuses on the ways social and political domination and how the distribution of “social goods” are represented and reproduced by text and talk semiotically. That is to mean, language is both socially representative, constitutive as well as "socially shaped" and “shaping”, and CDA has a keen emancipatory objective (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997:258; Wodak & Meyer, 2002).

Tracing back, Critical Linguistics has been an approach to the analysis of discourse for three decades passed, and as one of its central objectives, it considers the ‘linguistic choices a text producer makes as a potential medium through which the ideological import of a particular discourse situation can be reproduced’.

Nevertheless, Fairclough & Wodak (1997:275), Fairclough (1989, 1995a, 2002) has conveniently translated the idea of critical linguistics into such working notions in that any part of the language texts and paralinguages constitute representations, recontextualizations, reflexive representations, reflexive self-constructions, relations, diverse ways of acting, of producing social life and identities (ways of being) in the semiotic mode. Fairclough explained this in that discourse represents particular world views, particular social relations between people, particular ways of acting and interacting, and particular social identities/ ways of being according to the purposes, context-co-texts and addressees of the text dialectically. It endeavors to unpack the de facto ideologies of discourse that have become so naturalized over time and are perceived as acceptable and natural features of discourse.

A close scrutiny at CDA as a method can generally be described as hyper-linguistic or supra-linguistic, in that practitioners who use CDA consider the larger discourse context, the meaning or the ideology that lies beyond the grammatical structure. The hyper-or-supra-linguistic element considers the political, the economic, context of language usage and production beginning from the local literal to the global chaotic arena. Likewise, Fairclough underscores that “language connects with the social (life) through being the primary domain of ideology, and through being both a site of, and a stake in, struggles for power" (1989:15).

Ruth Wodak agrees that CDA is rooted on the idea that there is unequal access to linguistic and social resources, resources that are controlled institutionally in which the pattern of access to discourse, social practices and communicative events is an essential element for CDA. That is, CDA aims at investigating critically social, political, economic and cultural inequality--the inequitable distribution of "social good": activities, subjects, and their social relations, instruments, objects, time and place, forms of consciousness, values, discourse, "look", money, wisdom, possessions, technology, control, academic intelligence, verbal abilities, age, knowledge, literacy, "common sense", etc. which are dialectically related as they are represented, expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (Harvey, 1996; Wodak, 2001; Fairclough, 1989, 1995a, 1995b, 2002). Hence, Fairclough & Wodak (1997) summarize the main tenets of CDA as follows:

*CDA addresses social problems and shows that power relations are discursive. Besides, discourse constitutes society and culture, and it does ideological work where the link between text and society is mediated. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory that oftentimes is historical in the form of social action.*

Ruth Wodak (1989) defines this field, which she calls 'critical linguistics', as an 'interdisciplinary' approach to language study with a critical point of view for the purpose of studying language behavior in natural speech situations of social relevance. Wodak also stresses the importance of diverse theoretical and methodological concepts and suggests that these can also be used for analyzing issues of social relevance, while attempting to expose inequality and injustice. Besides, Wodak encourages the use of multiple methods in language research while emphasizing the importance of recognizing the historical and social aspects.

More importantly, Fairclough contends that language contributes to the domination of some people by others, and that a more critical analysis of the ideological workings of language is "the first step towards emancipation" (1989: 1). Fairclough's (1989) peculiar approach to CDA has moved from focusing on the "What?" of the text description toward the "How?" and "Why?" of the text interpretation and explanation, i.e. why a speaker/writer selects certain forms or models. There are core urges rooted in these selections and these assumptions have never been 'innocent', rather they are 'ideologically loaded' forever.

Fairclough (1995a) considers CDA as an approach that tends to investigate the relationships between discursive practices and the social structures in which they are employed. CDA holds

that the relationship is not usually open to the reader/listener. That's why, CDA seeks to unpack the causal and determinative relation existing between the two.

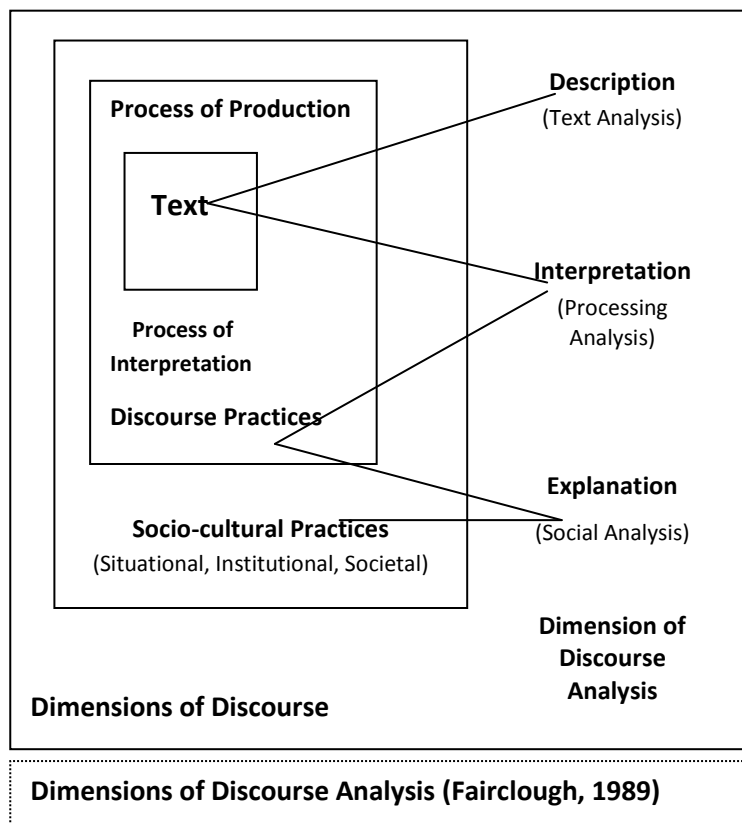
Furthermore, it is to explore the ways such practices are constructed by the ideology which is, in turn, shaped by the power relations practiced in the community. Language, according to Fairclough (1995; 2002), plays a crucial role in both revealing social processes and interactions in practice and constructing them; it glazes through the thick-opaque side of social life: social structures, social practices and social events. Fairclough (1989:22) views language as "a form of social practice." That is to say, he maintains that language as "a socially conditioned process" cannot be abstracted from the society to which it belongs. By viewing language as a social process, Fairclough (1989) holds that language does not function just as a passive reflection of the society and the social interaction or processes that occur there, but it is an indispensable part of the social process.

Hence, discourse--a chunk of language beyond a sentence, shaped in the society is a site for both producing and interpreting the text. The social condition for producing/interpreting the text is, in turn, related to three levels of social organization (Fairclough, 1989). These are, first, the social context in which the text is used; second, the social institution; third, the society at large. These three levels play a significant role in producing/interpreting the text embedded semiotically.

The linguistic theory Fairclough based his framework on is referred to as Hallidayan (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The theory of Halliday takes a functional approach towards analyzing a text. It aims at examining sentences in their context and finding the intended meaning expressed by the text. Despite his awareness of the point that textual features of discourse manifest themselves in linguistic properties, Fairclough takes an interpretive approach in analyzing a text instead of a descriptive one which is practiced widely by linguistic analysis. For Fairclough (2002:124)

*critical discourse analysis ... oscillates between a focus on structure and a focus on action--between a focus on shifts in the social structuring of semiotic diversity (orders of discourse), and a focus on the productive semiotic work which goes on in particular texts and interactions. In both perspectives, a central concern is shifting articulations between genres, discourses, and styles--the shifting social structuring of relationships between them which achieve a relative stability and permanence in orders of discourse, and the ongoing working of relationships*

between them in texts and interactions. The term 'interdiscursivity' is reserved for the latter: the 'interdiscursivity' of a text is a part of its intertextuality, a question of which genres, discourses and styles it draws upon, and how it works them into particular articulations.



Besides what has been subtly articulated and sketched above by Fairclough, the CDA I have used has required theorization and description of both the social processes and structures which give rise to the production of a text, and of the social structures and processes within which individuals or groups as social (historical) subjects, create meanings in their interaction with “texts” and the semiosis (Fairclough & Kress, 1993 quoted in Wodak, 2002). Consequently, as Wodak (2002:3) concludes, the three fundamental concepts figure indispensably in all CDA: “the concept of power, the concept of history, and the concept of ideology” will be employed dialectically in my analysis to bring forth the real intent of President Barak Hussein Obama’s speech delivered to the Israelites’ youth on March, 2013 at Jerusalem.

## **2. Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to critically analyze the discourses (CDA) of President Barack Hussein Obama regarding the Middle East and (North) Africa via the world. Very specifically, the study has tried to:

1. discover with whom Obama is Pro-ideology in de facto in the Middle East and North Africa (either be called Middles).
2. uncover Obama's representation and justification of America and it's "allied" power and cooperation in Middles.
3. explicate Obama's personal, state and international interests and envisagings (doctrines).
4. unpack Obama's emancipatory and regulatory strategies of the Middles.

## **5. Research Questions**

1. How does Obama stand for, envisage and legitimizes national and international security, peace and prosperity, and intervention in the affairs of "sovereign countries" in discourse?
2. What are the real agenda behind the allied and collided US- "Arabs"- Israel?
3. How does Obama represent world change, power/hegemonic contestations and envisage operationalisation for "change, peace, security and prosperity"?
4. What kind of discourse Obama wants to emerge in Israel and the Arab (Muslim) World?
5. What are the general and specific, covert and overt discourses drown up on and combined or not done so?



## **6. The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) Analytical Framework Employed in the Study**

To analyze Obama's discourse in Middle-East and the world, I have used the analytical framework for CDA which is represented schematically below by Fairclough (2002:125) which has been "modelled upon the critical theorist Roy Bhaskar's concept of 'explanatory critique' (Bhaskar, 1986; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999 cited in Fairclough, 2002).

These generally are:

- 1.1. Focus upon a social problem which has a semiotic aspect.
- 1.2. Identify obstacles to it being tackled, through analysis of:
  - 1.2.1. The network of practices it is located within
  - 1.2.2. The relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practice(s) concerned
  - 1.2.3. The discourse (the semiosis itself )
    - 1.2.3.1. Structural analysis: the order of discourse
    - 1.2.3.2. Interactional analysis
    - 1.2.3.3. Interdiscursive analysis
    - 1.2.3.4. Linguistic and semiotic analysis.
- 4.3. Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense 'needs' the problem.
- 4.4. Identify possible ways past the obstacles.
- 4.5. Reflect critically on the analyses (from 1 through 4).

In the process, I have opted for drawing up on Obama's clue words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs that signal representation, emergence, recontextualizations, operationalisation, and the order of discourses at transdisciplinary way.

Besides, I have used word count-analysis of priority, weight and focus for some issues of sticking, colliding, tagging and distancing regarding Barack Obama, America, the Middles and the World.

## **5. Rational of the Speeches Selected for Analysis**

In this study I have drawn up four thermal keynotes made in different contexts of assorted order of discourse and social structure. The speeches were given to the People of Egypt in 2009, the American people in 2011, the American-Israelites lobby group (AIPAC) in 2012 and People of Israel in 2013. Even though the remarks had been made to the aforementioned target countries, they have been meant to the international community. These four remarks were similar in nature in which their themes are all about the Middle East and (North) Africa but are both advises and warnings to the world that have similar interests, planes and moves. Besides, the keynotes made represent United States of America's contemporary foreign affairs ideology, policy and practices. For strong keen to get the 'real yolk out of the layered egg', I have opted for the four remarks of President Obama in different places and years to different audiences and target groups.

## **6. A Brief Profile of Barack Hussein Obama**

Barak Hussein Obama, who becomes the first African-American president of the United States was born on August 4, 1961, in Hawaii and has lived in many places, including Indonesia. His mother was from Kansas and his father from Kenya. Obama attended Columbia University in New York and earned a law degree at Harvard University in Massachusetts. He and his wife, Michelle Obama, who also worked as a lawyer and later for the University of Chicago, have two young daughters, Sasha and Malia.

Serving in the Senate since 2004, Obama introduced bipartisan legislation which allows Americans to learn online how their tax dollars are spent. He also serves on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, which helps oversee the care of soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. So his approval rate on the internet is high. The most supporters of Obama are young people, African-American, poor citizens and the people who want to change. Facing with the economic crisis, two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Obama gave his campaign slogan "change has come" and hoped to rebuild the confidence and beliefs of Americans. In his first presidential candidacy, Barack Obama defeated Hillary Rodham Clinton, the former first lady, and became the presidential candidate of the Democratic Party.

And during the following months in 2008, he defeated McCain, the Republican Party's presidential candidate, and won the all three television debates held in Oxford (Mississippi),

Nashville (Tennessee) and Hempstead (New York). And finally he won the final success and became the 44<sup>th</sup> American president and the first African-American president in American history and a double elect.

## **7. The Critical Discourse Analysis of Barack Hussein Obama's Selected Speeches**

Barack Obama, President of the United States of America since 2008 has made customary to deliver relatively longer remarks when it comes to issues of turmoil: peace, security, prosperity, engagement and change in many occasions since his presidential candidacy and the two-term seats at the White House. Likewise, the seventy-three paragraphed speech, delivered with frequent and extended “applauses” (about 85 applauses) to the young Israelites mentioning Israel more than 190 times directly and indirectly on March 21, 2013 at Jerusalem Convention Centre (Jerusalem), could be taken as the best substantiation; the others likewise.

In the following section, I would like to pinpoint, synthesize and analyze his key sample speeches regarding the Middle East and (North) Africa. Even if it is all about these tsunami regions of relevance to America, it reflects America's clear international political and economic interests reaffirming that “though these countries may be a great distance from our shores, we know that our own future is bound to this region by the forces of economics and security, by history and by faith” (BO-USPMENA2).

Hence, it is important to note in the following section about the analysis of Obama's speeches concerning the Middles, which you can easily decipher, that the discursive event and discursive structure interrelatedness of ideas proposed by Norman Fairclough, have been due to the results of the analysis. To put it in clear terms, the speeches which are called the discursive events shaped the texts that are the discursive structure, and the discourse became subject of interpretation by the audience, which shaped the discourse practices of President Barack Hussein Obama and the target people (region).

## 7.1. Narrating Morality and Religion

Apparently, Obama begins with “thank you”, “thank you” and “*shalom*”, extends “a greeting of peace from Muslim communities: *assalaamu alaykum*” and expresses a very warm welcome received for his presence and visit at least in the languages of the audience and the “superpowers” to grab intimacy and to show ‘alliance’. Obama very carefully draws successful/important people and palaces quoting their names, even nick names, their achievements and sayings: “I want to begin by thanking Hilary Clinton” (BO-USPMENA1); “I am honored to be in the timeless city of Cairo...”(BOE1); “Rosy(AIPAC’s president Lee Rosenberg), thank you for your kind words...you have been a dear friend of mine for a long time and a tireless advocate for the unbreakable bonds between Israel and united states...” (BO-AIPAC1); “Bibi” (Prime Minister Netanyahu) (BO-YIJ4, BO-AIPAC17); “It is a great honor to be here with you in Jerusalem and I am so grateful to the welcome that I have received from the people of Israel” (BO-YIJ1); and “I am grateful for your hospitality, and the hospitality of the people of Egypt” (BOE1).

In such and so, he attempts to bring shared intimacy and friendship and go through their heads and hearts which have big moral values embedded in genre, discourse and style. He also includes a seemingly ‘friendship’ violating the consistency of morality as he greets them in different languages embedded in the religion of a difference which is a reflexive representation to show a semiotically constituted way of being “the same”, (Fairclough, 1989), for Barack Obama. Likewise, his closing remarks are always very religious: “May God’s peace be up on you” (BOE66); “God bless you, God bless the people of Israel, God bless the United States of America.” (BO-AIPAC35); “May God bless you. May God bless Israel. May God bless the United States of America. *Toda Raba*” (BO-YIJ73). From the closing remarks, the entire theme in narrating and representing religion and morality is the enacting, inculcating and re-scaling strategy of ‘sacrosanct’ (BO-AIPAC6) ‘partnership’ and ‘cooperation’ for operationalisation; the idea which preaches in religious closing remarks to show “intimacy and brotherhood” though it is all addressing America and the Christians.

What is more, world religion is represented as “the three great religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—that trace their origins to Abraham, and see Jerusalem as sacred” (BO-YIJ8) which he believes “faith should bring us together...Christians, Muslims, and Jews” (BOE50), and appreciates a universal “rule that lies at the heart of every religion—that ‘we do unto others as we would have them to do unto us’” (BOE64) in compromises for religious tolerance in differences. In a similar regard Obama dictates and preaches a lot about Islam (BOE46-49) to the Muslims; this is teaching the best teachers:

*Islam has a proud tradition of tolerance. We see it in the history of Andalusia and Cordoba during the Inquisition. I saw it firsthand as a child in Indonesia, where devout Christians worshiped freely in an overwhelmingly Muslim country. That is the spirit we need today. People in every country should be free to choose and live their faith based upon the persuasion of the mind and the heart and the soul. This tolerance is essential for religion to thrive, but it's being challenged in many different ways. Among some Muslims, there's a disturbing tendency to measure one's own faith by the rejection of somebody else's faith. The richness of religious diversity must be upheld—whether it is for Maronites in Lebanon or the Copts in Egypt. And if we are being honest, fault lines must be closed among Muslims, as well, as the divisions between Sunni and Shia have led to tragic violence, particularly in Iraq. Freedom of religion is central to the ability of peoples to live together. We must always examine the ways in which we protect it. For instance, in the United States, rules on charitable giving have made it harder for Muslims to fulfill their religious obligation. That's why I'm committed to working with American Muslims to ensure that they can fulfill zakat. Likewise, it is important for Western countries to avoid impeding Muslim citizens from practicing religion as they see fit—for instance, by dictating what clothes a Muslim woman should wear. We can't disguise hostility towards any religion behind the pretense of liberalism.*

In his speech, Obama tried to enact and inculcate morality that should originate from religion and loves to quote Jews, Muslims, and Christians, “we are one” (BO-USPMENA37). On the other hand, he promotes the “Zionist-idea-an idea to be free in one's own land”, the faiths in Islam and Christianity which should sparkle peace, security and morality from within and bids people firm; “Be conscious of God and speak always the truth” (BOE6), even though both Muslims and Jews (even Christians) have a strong affair of the Holy Land; Israel, Jerusalem.

In an attempt, Obama imagines the emergence and hegemony of power in recontextualizations and re-scaling of religion and morality according to “a new beginning keeping in mind what has been written: The Holy Koran tells us: ‘O mankind! We have created you male and a female; and we have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another.’ The Talmud tells

us: ‘The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace.’ The Holy Bible tells us: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.’ ...We know that is God’s vision. Now that must be our work here on Earth” (BOE65). In these quotes from every religion, he wants to show that each religion worships the “same” idea; Theo-philosophical congruence should emerge and non-upheaval engagement in religions should pursue and transform.

Generally, Obama wants to emerge a discourse within religion, morality and the people-metaphors that hold the “solution lies with the people” conformed and sustained “not simple by men and women, but by laws” that originates from religion (OB-YIJ20).

## 7.2. Narrating Change

There are themes in the discourses that are salient in each speeches of Barack Obama on the Middles and Africa related to “change”. Obama likes the way that “There must be no doubt that the United States of America welcomes change that advances self-determination and opportunity” (BO-USPMENA15) from the people “demands for consistent change—with change that are consistent with the principles” (BO-USPMENA23). The principles are all for Americas self-fulfillment with the discourses of “support” and “democracy”. He said that America “must support positive change in the region...through...efforts to advance economic development for nations that are transitioning to democracy” (BO-USPMENA39).

He would like to represent change and “globalization” as “a new beginning” in a strong belief that “change cannot happen overnight” (OBE5-6). Besides when Obama needs a real change to be understood and underscored, he uses repetition to discourse as it figures in “lively...lively may be an understatement” (BO-YIJ15) hinting “the obligations-the obligations” (BOE31) that “I have made it clear to the (country) people, I have made it clear to the (country) people”(BOE25) that “it was innovation in Muslim communities, it was innovation in Muslim communities...”(BOE8) “I know-I know” (BOE42) “as in the story of Isra-as in the story of Isra”(BOE38) which has brought and is bringing “revolutionary” “democratic” “change”. For Obama, ‘globalization’ is narrated as the process of ‘homogeneity’ one affected easily in the ‘network’. For instance, he has:

*learned from recent experience that when a financial system weakens in one country, prosperity is hurt everywhere. When a new flu infects one human being,*

*all are at risk. When one nation pursues a nuclear weapon, the risk of nuclear attack rises for all nations. When violent extremists operate in one stretch of mountains, people are endangered across an ocean. When innocents in Bosnia and Darfur are slaughtered, that is a stain on our collective conscience. That is what it means to share this world in the twenty-first century. That is the responsibility we have to one another as human beings (BOE16).*

He mentions a recent ‘phenomena’ to show the ‘new emergence of globalization’ and its future inevitable ‘dominance’. Obama believes that “the sweeping change” has been “brought by modernity and globalization” (BOE2). However, he understands people all over the world that change can bring fear quoting that:

*In all nations—including America—this change can bring fear. Fear that because of modernity we lose control over our economic choices, our politics, and most importantly our identities—those things we most cherish about our communities, our families, our traditions, and our faith (BOE54).*

Likewise, Obama added his fear for the “change” he would like to represent and recontextualise it for operation in that:

*civilizations are doomed to clash. Many more are simply skeptical that real change can occur. There’s so much fear, so much mistrust that has built up over the years. But if we choose to be bound by the past, we will never move forward. And I want to particularly say this to young people of every faith, in every country—you, more than anyone, have the ability to re-imagine the world, to remake this world (BOE62).*

Fear and terror, as Obama believes, have been due to “Al-Qaeda, Osama Bin-Laden and other allied terrorist groups” in which they believe that “violence against the West, men, women and children was the only path to change” (BO-USPMENA4).

However, extraordinary ‘change’ can come from few individuals’ philosophies and ideologies, as Obama would like to ‘emerge’ and ‘reengage’; “there are times in the course of history when the actions of ordinary citizens spark movements for change because they speak to a longing for freedom that has been building up for years” (BO-USPMENA6).

Obama also understands that change will come not from the old and the adult community, but from the young generation who would like to discover life (BO-USPMENA40).

*Throughout the region, many young people have a solid education, but closed economies leave them unable to find a job. Entrepreneurs are brimming with ideas, but corruption leaves them unable to profit from those ideas.*

He is deadly beat of the persistence from the old generation not bringing change by saying “The international community is tired of an endless process that never produces an outcome” (BO-USPMENA52). He strongly tried to order the young of his favorite politics by saying that “You (*the young Israelites*) must create the change that you want to see” (BO-YIJ59). Obama sees the change to “Look at the young people who’ve not yet learned a reason to mistrust, or those young people who’ve learned to overcome a legacy of mistrust that they inherited from their parents” (BO-YIJ60).

Generally, Obama would like to represent “change” in that “through the moral forces of nonviolence, the people of the region have achieved more change in six months than terrorists have accomplished in decades”. Furthermore, “change” of a different “magnitude does not come easily...but it will be years... along the way, there will be good days and there will bad days...in some places, change will be swift; in others gradual...calls for change may give way, in some cases, to fierce contests for power” (BO-USPMENA12). Americans are taking “concrete actions to change course” (BOE26) in ‘democracy’, ‘entrepreneurships’, ‘innovation’, ‘freedom’, ‘independency’, etc. He added that “No one-no single step can change overnight what lies in the hearts and minds of millions. No single step is going to erase years of history and propaganda” (BO-YIJ44). But for Barack Obama “...the greatest miracle is recognizing that the world can change” (BO-YIJ62).

### **7.3. Narrating Obama’s Doctrine in the Middle East**

Obama has vibrant strategies in taking an initial skepticism in all sensitive issues of the Middle-East, North Africa and the international arena of such brittles-‘turmoil’ which he believes that useless conflicts will weaken necessary wars. Hence, his genre and styles representing “America’s future is bound to Middle East and North Africa ‘square-be-square, time- by- time, and country- by-country by the “forces of economy, security, history, and faith” (BO-USPMENA2) understanding that “some nations are blessed with oil and gas” (BO-USPMENA8) with natural resources and the way to share this resources with is a “soft talk with big stick”.



It is crystal clear that Israel and America share imperative interests in a chaotic Middle East thought that has different levels and intensities of friendship. These are one, banning the Iranian regime's sprint for nuclear weapons and terror-driven regional supremacy, two, regulating Syria's escalating instability while tracking its swamy stores of chemical weapons, putting an 'eagle eye' on radical Islam- "violent Islamic extremism", and a "lasting security, peace and prosperity" between Palestine and Israel-the big dilemma. In the likewise, another and capably threatening country (mostly Islamic) shall never exist, and this shall be achieved by a bit-by-bit demolishing of such emerging countries who start to speak to the Americans' necks and noses.

Obama has both promotive and regulative strategies to be "engaged" in for "democracy and freedom". The "security and peace" of the Middle East is a top priority for America and its international interests to exploit the adequate "'treasures', 'patents', 'innovation', 'recourses' timeless holy sites and ground breaking innovations" (BO-YIJ2) and America is "working with the world that is united" so that "Iran (or any x country) must not get a nuclear weapon', and America could gamble free of the blaze.

As Israelis have lived in "a neighborhood where many... have rejected the right to exist" (BO-AIPAC13 & 14; BO-YIJ34, 35, 36 &38), Obama would like to 'renew', extend and underscore strength, justice and resolution before action to be taken in the Middle East and the world. Obama's warnings repeated in every keynote itinerary (route) show it crystal clear that Iran or a similar hostile country will never ever be allowed to 'develop' and 'possess nuclear weapons'. That understanding, coupled with crippling sanctions, is clearly envisaged to persuade the Iranian government for the 'golden bridge of peace' in which "everything is on the table" (BO-YIJ33).

"Obama's doctrine" as an all-waiting lists style seems erroneously predictable in which the pivotal point of the doctrine would emphasize "negotiations" and "collaborations" with exclusive of "confrontation", "war" and "unilateralism" in every international affairs; the Middles special, to avoid "fear" and "terror" from "Islamic extremism, violence" and advancing to escalating "democracy", "globalization", "liberalism", "freedom" and the multi-genres of the 'new capitalism' agenda which targets to begin with "the young-you and me, we" as engines of "the Middles Awakening" (BOE59; BO-USPMENA56, 57; BO-AIPAC14, 15, 16; BO-YIJ45, 53 ).

Most importantly, any ‘allay’, ‘support’ and ‘aid’ ‘engagement’ in the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia is believed as stimuli in creating many jobs in the United States of America or anywhere in the world of any form securing America’s interests of a contemporary. New engagements and friendships are believed to create confusions and US America-Israelites will detect the problems and act as the troubleshooters and maintain the way. For so, Obama explained his doctrine in Muslim countries in that:

*On science and technology, we will launch a new fund to support technological development in Muslim-majority countries, and to help transfer ideas to the marketplace so they can create more jobs. We’ll open centers of scientific excellence in Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and appoint new science envoys to collaborate on programs that develop new sources of energy, create green jobs, digitize records, clean water, grow new crops. Today I’m announcing a new global effort with the Organization of the Islamic Conference to eradicate polio. And we will also expand partnerships with Muslim communities to promote child and maternal health (BOE59). All these things must be done in partnership. Americans are ready to join with citizens and governments; community organizations, religious leaders, and businesses in Muslim communities around the world to help our people pursue a better life (BOE60).*

In a nutshell, Obama needs the Middles and entire world to lean down America and her “true allies” and please them, to unquestionably accept their narratives, be convinced vibrantly on each split of seconds without fault lines; nevertheless, America understands the need to revise its narrative and get rid of the propaganda that animates the entire worldview for re-engagement, rescaling and recontextualizations of partnership governance, as US-Israeli people wonder why peace hasn't been achieved though great political propaganda and plans have be ‘ratified’ and “operated?” With Israel and the Jewish people; all the same since 65<sup>th</sup> years, Obama affirmed us clearly to:

*make no mistake-those who adhere to the ideology of rejecting Israel’s right to exist, they might as well reject the earth beneath them or the sky above, because Israel is not going anywhere. And today, I want to tell you-particularly the young people-so that there's no mistake here, so long as there is a United States of America-Atem lo levad. You are not alone (BO-YIJ36).*

## 7.4. Representing the Allay Dilemma Continuum and Ideology /Power Contestations

Obama knows how to bridge the gaps as a go-between, on the one hand, and shows an “eternal allay” using simple and intimate discourse and representations, on the other side. He always begins with a masked ‘thank you’ in the ‘dominant’ language of his audience ‘shalom’/’assalaamu alaykum’/good + time and catchy discriminatory phrases “I bring with me *the support* of the American People and the friendship that binds us together” (BO-YIJ1), “and I am proud to carry with me *the goodwill* of the American people” (BOE1). These all attempts can clearly represent the political dilemmatic discourse of America even to her Middle allies and the discriminatory power pull-and-throw at different speeds and distances.

Likewise, he represents intimacy and allay in a sense of ‘witnesses to the ancient history...at the Shrine of the Book’ and by invoking memories of the greatest achievements of the country and of the people with Israel (BO-YIJ2):

*I've seen Israel's shining future in your scientists and your entrepreneurs. This is a nation of museums and patents, timeless holy sites and ground-breaking innovation. Only in Israel could you see the Dead Sea Scrolls and the place where the technology on board the Mars Rover originated at the same time.*

In addition, he depicted the amalgamation of religion (tradition) and academics (progress) as ways to see America’s allies (the Muslim world) in a Theo-scientific way which has always been very dilemmatic her:

*For over a thousand years, Al-Azhar has stood as a beacon of Islamic learning; and for over a century, Cairo University has been a source of Egypt's advancement. And together, you represent the harmony between tradition (religion) and progress (BOE1).*

Above and beyond, his language is very oscillatory (from friendship to a greatest politician) to get rapports of both intimacy and power accompanied with magical body languages that can shorten the distance between him and the audience. It is easy to detect so that Obama makes his audience more easily understand and accept his political speeches by means of easy and mixed sentence structures throughout his speech with his peculiar intonation and voice modulation for power and hegemony. Moreover, by using his name, position ‘as a politician’, ‘as a friend’, ‘you and me’, ‘power’, ‘America’, ‘the American People’, ‘my country’, religious beliefs, and by calling Israel, the Jewish and the people very frequently, he successfully shortens the distance

between him and the audience, especially with Israelites. So it can help him persuade the “Jewish ‘youth’” to accept, support, and confirm his allies and actions.

Obama uses most of the linguistic mechanisms of power in the models such as religion, persuasion and future plan’s statements. Obama also narrates and represents Biblical themes and religion where his clear dilemma oscillates back-and-forth in showing equal weigh at sometime and discrimination at another when he believes his (America’s) and its allies power is rivaled.

Likewise, since Obama’s beginning with his juvenile political rally through his seat grant at White House, he has been believed to speak with a “forked” (BO-AIPAC5) tongue; very intricate to know what he really thinks. As a result, majority of the Israelis and the Muslims (Arabs) have no clue for Obama whether he is Pro-Israeli or Pro-‘Arabs’/Palestinian. Obama’s statement in this speech “let me say this as a politician: I can promise you this, political leaders will never take risks if the people do not push them to take some risks,” (BO-YIJ59), shows that he and his administration tacitly and probably unconsciously admit that he has caved to the Israel lobby and wants a push from both sides, not from one.

Indeed, the most remarkable aspect of Obama’s political discourses in his entire presidency and with regards to the Middles has been its emphasis on shrewd calculation of the compromise most suited to “his country” and himself. Obama’s triumph during the trip were “symbolic” which were achieved by smiling and uttering soothing expressions about Israel’s achievements and inherent legitimacy toward convincing Israelis and American Jews (BO-YIJ).

From transitivity analysis, we can see material process; a process of doing has been used mostly in his speeches. Obama would like to show the world what his government (America) has achieved, what they are going and what they will do to hold a strong power. He will do whatever he likes to do on (Islamic) countries that have “chemical weapons”, and “to prevent a nuclear armed” region, for America could grab and resource and gamble freely.

Apparently America has always been behind allegations of shacked and demolished countries which were thought to be ‘growing in power and economy’: ‘Korea’, Russia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, Iran and it goes on the queue day in-and-day-out, year-in-and-year-out as long as it shall benefit America for power and a hegemonic discourse. It has also appeared that United States of America has multifaceted (double) standards of “allay”, “partnerships”, “support”, “collaboration”, “aid”, “friendship” and “interests” that show the clear alley dilemma: with Israel, “make no mistake” America has “unshakable”, “unbreakable”,

“strong” and “eternal” “bonds” from both sides-“the strong bipartisan support”; with Iraq, she has posed big pressures to the government and the people; with Libya, Tunisia and Syria America cooperates with the people and the opposition parties; with Bahrain, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Egypt, etc. she comes with the government in “eternal partnership” and “love”.

Nevertheless, Palestine is the stroke and nuisance that measures America’s, and still Obama’s, dilemma to relive and an inability of a decision to “transform” words into “actions”. Hence, America is neither Pro-Israel nor Pro-Arabs; she is pro-self as long as her political and economic power and interests are kept on the safe-side.

## **7.5. Narrating and Realizing Identity and Background**

Barack Obama shows the gradual decline of confidence in American power to be safeguarded in; the raging fire anti-West, Anti-Semitism, Anti-Americanism, Anti-globalization and many genres of “Antis” all over the globe; and the ongoing borderless war against ‘terrorism’ in all its facets which put greater ‘security challenges’ intricate to bear up. Hence, it triggered him with the theme of (BOE62; BO-YIJ20) “re-imagine”, “renew”, “engage”, “change”, “recover” and “rebuild” that aimed to enhance America’s reputation and power and restore its popularity around the world. This ‘engagement’ has taken multidimensional approaches such as intervention, renewal, friendship and reconstruction in the “Middle East” “to mark a new chapter of American diplomacy” (BO-USPMENA2). He uses simple tenses to present the domestic and the world wide situations ranging from political, economic and cultural fields at present in all the four speeches.

Obama brings an inspiration-a role model for many youths internationally (BO-YIJ). He always inculcates his personal story and the story of many from history in the Christianity, Islam, and Judaism; from freedom fighters has amazed and aroused a sense of “touching history” and in immediate decision to “engagements” (see all of Obama’s Speeches). He would not like to take a stand in any religious sect; otherwise asked. These all attempts are the rebuilding of Americans’ identity crisis as they are multi-ethnic who clustered at the AmerigoVispusi’s Island.

His charismatic quality and phenomenal rhetorical ability has ever added to his halo, not for “actions” but for shows. From history of the African-Americans recall and ‘recontextualizations’

of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. who “stood proud against discrimination and oppression” and with the recent fact that he was “chosen by the American people to lead” them, he creates and rescales his identity as politically powerful. He also uses religious references to show that he leads politico-religious identity. Besides, Obama would like to symbolize “a new and modern connotation of "the right to freedom, change and the pursuit of happiness" to overarch as his newly modified vehicle for ‘globalization’, ‘knowledge economy’, ‘change’ and ‘engagement’. In the following section, a word count analysis is presented to support the foregone findings.

## 7.6. Word Count Discourse Analysis with a focus on Priority and Weight-giving

**Table-1: Hostility Discourse analysis of Obama’s Speech**

<b>No</b>	<b>Positive Word</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Negative Word</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1	Right (Good)	178	War	51
2	Democracy	44	Nuclear	33
3	Work	38	Violence	30
4	Freedom/free	35	Kill /die	23
5	Support	33	Weapon	23
6	Change	38	Against	23
7	New	31	Conflict	23
8	Economy	31	Terror	16
9	Transform	24	Extremism(st)	16
10	Start /begin	24	End	16
11	Bring (change)	18	Threat	14
12	Develop	17	Hate	10
13	Build	15	Prevent (avoid)	10
14	Grow	14	Risk	10
15	Independence	10	Tension	9
16	Possible	9	Stop	8
17	Engage	7	Danger	7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>566</b>		<b>322</b>

According to data (table-1) retrieved using Adobe search analysis from the four keynotes, Barack Obama is inclined to the use of harmless words (using major positive words 566 times more frequently) as a strategy to re-contextualize and represent peace, security and prosperity in the eyes of his “new engagement’ and “change” strategies. He would like to approach not from the

“violent” (major words counted 322) side of ideological representation of politics to win “cooperation”. Hence, he was non-hostile in his speeches.

**Table-2: Discourse in the use of Auxiliaries**

No	Auxiliary	Frequency
1	Is/are	480
2	Will /shall	202
3	Must /Have to/has to	104
4	Can /could	102
5	Would/Should	65
6	Do	34
7	May /Might	21
8	Don't /Must not	6

Similarly, data under Table-2 above shows that Obama has spent his time by “stating and explaining (is/are, 480)” ideology to rescale his political actions and policy and re-engage in the Middles in his “Obamatic ideology”. The auxiliaries show the discourse orders, genres and styles that Obama has been trying to enact and inculcate in his policy. He opted for politeness, little instructions and external obligations to comply. He has been preparing and cleaning the mess to start operationalisation before he leaves? his seat at White House.

**Table-3: Discourse in Peace, Security and Prosperity Priority analysis**

No	Word	Frequency
1	Peace	93
2	Security	72
3	Prosperity	19

As per data presented at Table-3, roughly, we can conclude that Obama’s priorities in the international arena are “peace” and “security” for America and its allies followed by prosperity at as ancillary for the target country. The following table also shows the priority given at regional and country level.

**Table-4: Discourse from National-International Priority analysis of countries/regions**

No	Region	Frequency	Country	Frequency
1	International	18	Israel	200
2	Global	10	America /US	153
3	My country	7	Iran	57

4	Foreign	4	Iraq	22
5	Local /National	4	Egypt	19
6	Our country	3	Syria	12
7	(Your) country	1	Palestine	8

From table-4, we can deduce that the international (18) or global (10) agenda of his speeches were all about Israelis' and Americas interest-these two countries are what for Obama, America (153) and Israel (200). Besides, Iran (57), Iraq (22), Egypt (19) and Syria (12) are under the red-point target for attack if not "allied" and come to "the table". However, Palestine (8) is not a country of agenda but an area not to be neglected to prevent the fire before its eruption.

**Table-5: Discourse from Religious Affiliation and Target Analysis**

No	Word	Frequency
1	Jew/Jewish	257
2	Islam/Muslims	97
3	Christian	10

A discourse use implication shown under Table-5 leads to believe that Obama gives the highest concern of protection/security for the Jews/Jewish religion followers-Israelites, advises the Islam/Muslims not to be hostile to them and the Christians; "Islam must be based on what it is, not what it isn't" (BOE10).

**Table-6: Discourse from noun-pronoun analysis**

No	Noun/Pronoun	Frequency
1	We /us/our/ours	478
2	I/me/my/mine	284
3	They/their	145
4	You/your	131
5	He/him/his	52
6	"Youth"	42
7	Women	21
8	Men	13
9	She/her/hers	6
10	Father	4
11	Child	4
12	Old	2
13	Mother	1



Data compiled under Table-6 gives us the clear implication that Obama needs cooperative work, sympathy and closeness (the We, 478) assigning himself (the I, 284) as a team (world) leader that the rest has to believe, follow and worship him. He would like to figure out cooperation from the youth (42) and male (the He, 52) generation. Generally, Obama speaks the “I” and “We” ideology believing himself as the ‘architect’ and ‘leader’ of the New World Order, Neo-Liberalism/New Capitalism, Democracy and Freedom and seeking others to cooperate with him. He would like to address the rest within the mass like “They” (131) and “You” (145). So he would like to give the “wine and the bread” if “peace and security” remain unchanged, kept constant.

## **Conclusion**

It has been clearly understood by wise politicians that politics is a struggle for power in order to strongly build beneficiary political and socio-economic ideas, and to transform into real practices on the ground. As a deep-seated part of the process, language plays the decisive role in every political battle which is prepared, accompanied, influenced and played by language (discourses) dialectically articulated with inclusions of the semiosis. In this regard, the analysis of the political discourse of Barack Obama regarding the Middles targets on condemning the “tyrants”, “extremists”, nuclear armed countries and “change” resistant’s. It also targets on the moldable and accommodable “young” generation for “change” with the vaccines and instruments of freedom, democracy, equality, tolerance, technology and globalization in order for America to easily slip and swipe into a given country (abundant in resource or politically important) without war and confrontations. The narrations of ideology, change, morality, religion, hegemony, identity and the allay dilemma discourse analysis in this article are the clear evidences from Obama’s (America’s) own words. They are backed by masked terms of support, allay, cooperation, renewal, engagement, partnership, interference and other beneficiary means of doorways for America to easily access the required resources or political advantages.

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## **Appendixes: Addresses by President Barack Obama on Crucial Issues of the Middle East and North Africa to America (From 2009-2013)**

### **Appendix-I: Speech on “A New Beginning” by President Barack Obama, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt**

(June 4, 2009; Source: The White House: [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) )

#### **BOE1**

Thank you very much. Good afternoon. I am honoured to be in the timeless city of Cairo, and to be hosted by two remarkable institutions. For over a thousand years, Al-Azhar has stood as a beacon of Islamic learning; and for over a century, Cairo University has been a source of Egypt’s advancement. And together, you represent the harmony between tradition and progress. I’m grateful for your hospitality, and the hospitality of the people of Egypt. And I’m also proud to carry with me the goodwill of the American people, and a greeting of peace from Muslim communities in my country: *assalaamu alaykum*.

#### **BOE2**

We meet at a time of great tension between the United States and Muslims around the world—tension rooted in historical forces that go beyond any current policy debate. The relationship between Islam and the West includes centuries of coexistence and cooperation, but also conflict and religious wars. More recently, tension has been fed by colonialism that denied rights and opportunities to many Muslims, and a Cold War in which Muslim-majority countries were too often treated as proxies without regard to their own aspirations. Moreover, the sweeping change brought by modernity and globalization led many Muslims to view the West as hostile to the traditions of Islam.

#### **BOE3**

Violent extremists have exploited these tensions in a small but potent minority of Muslims. The attacks of September 11, 2001, and the continued efforts of these extremists to engage in violence against civilians has led some in my country to view Islam as inevitably hostile not only to America and Western countries, but also to human rights. All this has bred more fear and more mistrust.

#### **BOE4**

So long as our relationship is defined by our differences, we will empower those who sow hatred rather than peace, those who promote conflict rather than the cooperation that can help all of our people achieve justice and prosperity. And this cycle of suspicion and discord must end.

#### **BOE5**

I’ve come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles—principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings.

#### **BOE6**

I do so recognizing that change cannot happen overnight. I know there’s been a lot of publicity about this speech, but no single speech can eradicate years of mistrust, nor can I answer in the time that I have this afternoon all the complex questions that brought us to this point. But I am convinced that in order to move forward, we must say openly to each other the things we hold in our hearts and that too often are said only behind closed doors. There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground. As the Holy Koran tells us, “Be conscious of God and speak always the truth.” That is what I will try to do today—to speak the truth as best I can, humbled by the task before us, and firm in my belief that the interests we share as human beings are far more powerful than the forces that drive us apart.

#### **BOE7**

Now part of this conviction is rooted in my own experience. I’m a Christian, but my father came from a Kenyan family that includes generations of Muslims. As a boy, I spent several years in Indonesia and

heard the call of the azaan at the break of dawn and at the fall of dusk. As a young man, I worked in Chicago communities where many found dignity and peace in their Muslim faith.

#### **BOE8**

As a student of history, I also know civilization's debt to Islam. It was Islam—at places like Al-Azhar—that carried the light of learning through so many centuries, paving the way for Europe's Renaissance and Enlightenment. It was innovation in Muslim communities—it was innovation in Muslim communities that developed the order of algebra; our magnetic compass and tools of navigation; our mastery of pens and printing; our understanding of how disease spreads and how it can be healed. Islamic culture has given us majestic arches and soaring spires; timeless poetry and cherished music; elegant calligraphy and places of peaceful contemplation. And throughout history, Islam has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality.

#### **BOE9**

I also know that Islam has always been a part of America's story. The first nation to recognize my country was Morocco. In signing the Treaty of Tripoli in 1796, our second President, John Adams, wrote, "The United States has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion or tranquility of Muslims." And since our founding, American Muslims have enriched the United States. They have fought in our wars, they have served in our government, they have stood for civil rights, they have started businesses, they have taught at our universities, they've excelled in our sports arenas, they've won Nobel Prizes, built our tallest building, and lit the Olympic Torch. And when the first Muslim American was recently elected to Congress, he took the oath to defend our Constitution using the same Holy Koran that one of our Founding Fathers—Thomas Jefferson—kept in his personal library.

#### **BOE10**

So I have known Islam on three continents before coming to the region where it was first revealed. That experience guides my conviction that partnership between America and Islam must be based on what Islam is, not what it isn't. And I consider it part of my responsibility as President of the United States to fight against negative stereotypes of Islam wherever they appear.

#### **BOE11**

But that same principle must apply to Muslim perceptions of America. Just as Muslims do not fit a crude stereotype, America is not the crude stereotype of a self-interested empire. The United States has been one of the greatest sources of progress that the world has ever known. We were born out of revolution against an empire. We were founded upon the ideal that all are created equal, and we have shed blood and struggled for centuries to give meaning to those words—within our borders, and around the world. We are shaped by every culture, drawn from every end of the Earth, and dedicated to a simple concept: E pluribus unum—"Out of many, one."

#### **BOE12**

Now, much has been made of the fact that an African American with the name Barack Hussein Obama could be elected President. But my personal story is not so unique. The dream of opportunity for all people has not come true for everyone in America, but its promise exists for all who come to our shores—and that includes nearly seven million American Muslims in our country today who, by the way, enjoy incomes and educational levels that are higher than the American average.

#### **BOE13**

Moreover, freedom in America is indivisible from the freedom to practice one's religion. That is why there is a mosque in every state in our union, and over 1,200 mosques within our borders. That's why the United States government has gone to court to protect the right of women and girls to wear the hijab and to punish those who would deny it.

#### **BOE14**

So let there be no doubt: Islam is a part of America. And I believe that America holds within her the truth that regardless of race, religion, or station in life, all of us share common aspirations—to live in peace and security; to get an education and to work with dignity; to love our families, our communities, and our God. These things we share. This is the hope of all humanity.

**BOE15**

Of course, recognizing our common humanity is only the beginning of our task. Words alone cannot meet the needs of our people. These needs will be met only if we act boldly in the years ahead; and if we understand that the challenges we face are shared, and our failure to meet them will hurt us all.

**BOE16**

For we have learned from recent experience that when a financial system weakens in one country, prosperity is hurt everywhere. When a new flu infects one human being, all are at risk. When one nation pursues a nuclear weapon, the risk of nuclear attack rises for all nations. When violent extremists operate in one stretch of mountains, people are endangered across an ocean. When innocents in Bosnia and Darfur are slaughtered, that is a stain on our collective conscience. That is what it means to share this world in the twenty-first century. That is the responsibility we have to one another as human beings.

**BOE17**

And this is a difficult responsibility to embrace. For human history has often been a record of nations and tribes—and, yes, religions—subjugating one another in pursuit of their own interests. Yet in this new age, such attitudes are self-defeating. Given our interdependence, any world order that elevates one nation or group of people over another will inevitably fail. So whatever we think of the past, we must not be prisoners to it. Our problems must be dealt with through partnership; our progress must be shared.

**BOE18**

Now, that does not mean we should ignore sources of tension. Indeed, it suggests the opposite: we must face these tensions squarely. And so in that spirit, let me speak as clearly and as plainly as I can about some specific issues that I believe we must finally confront together.

**BOE19**

The first issue that we have to confront is violent extremism in all of its forms. In Ankara, I made clear that America is not—and never will be—at war with Islam. We will, however, relentlessly confront violent extremists who pose a grave threat to our security—because we reject the same thing that people of all faiths reject: the killing of innocent men, women, and children. And it is my first duty as President to protect the American people.

**BOE20**

The situation in Afghanistan demonstrates America's goals, and our need to work together. Over seven years ago, the United States pursued Al-Qaeda and the Taliban with broad international support. We did not go by choice; we went because of necessity. I'm aware that there's still some who would question or even justify the events of 9/11. But let us be clear: Al-Qaeda killed nearly 3,000 people on that day. The victims were innocent men, women and children from America and many other nations who had done nothing to harm anybody. And yet Al-Qaeda chose to ruthlessly murder these people, claimed credit for the attack, and even now states their determination to kill on a massive scale. They have affiliates in many countries and are trying to expand their reach. These are not opinions to be debated; these are facts to be dealt with.

**BOE21**

Now, make no mistake: we do not want to keep our troops in Afghanistan. We see no military—we seek no military bases there. It is agonizing for America to lose our young men and women. It is costly and politically difficult to continue this conflict. We would gladly bring every single one of our troops home if we could be confident that there were not violent extremists in Afghanistan and now Pakistan determined to kill as many Americans as they possibly can. But that is not yet the case.

**BOE22**

And that's why we're partnering with a coalition of forty-six countries. And despite the costs involved, America's commitment will not weaken. Indeed, none of us should tolerate these extremists. They have killed in many countries. They have killed people of different faiths—but more than any other, they have killed Muslims. Their actions are irreconcilable with the rights of human beings, the progress of nations, and with Islam. The Holy Koran teaches that whoever kills an innocent is as—it is as if he has killed all mankind. And the Holy Koran also says whoever saves a person, it is as if he has saved all mankind. The

enduring faith of over a billion people is so much bigger than the narrow hatred of a few. Islam is not part of the problem in combating violent extremism—it is an important part of promoting peace.

**BOE23**

Now, we also know that military power alone is not going to solve the problems in Afghanistan and Pakistan. That's why we plan to invest \$1.5 billion each year over the next five years to partner with Pakistanis to build schools and hospitals, roads and businesses, and hundreds of millions to help those who've been displaced. That's why we are providing more than \$2.8 billion to help Afghans develop their economy and deliver services that people depend on.

**BOE24**

Let me also address the issue of Iraq. Unlike Afghanistan, Iraq was a war of choice that provoked strong differences in my country and around the world. Although I believe that the Iraqi people are ultimately better off without the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, I also believe that events in Iraq have reminded America of the need to use diplomacy and build international consensus to resolve our problems whenever possible. Indeed, we can recall the words of Thomas Jefferson, who said: "I hope that our wisdom will grow with our power, and teach us that the less we use our power the greater it will be."

**BOE25**

Today, America has a dual responsibility: to help Iraq forge a better future—and to leave Iraq to Iraqis. And I have made it clear to the Iraqi people—I have made it clear to the Iraqi people that we pursue no bases, and no claim on their territory or resources. Iraq's sovereignty is its own. And that's why I ordered the removal of our combat brigades by next August. That is why we will honor our agreement with Iraq's democratically elected government to remove combat troops from Iraqi cities by July, and to remove all of our troops from Iraq by 2012. We will help Iraq train its security forces and develop its economy. But we will support a secure and united Iraq as a partner, and never as a patron.

**BOE26**

And finally, just as America can never tolerate violence by extremists, we must never alter or forget our principles. Nine-eleven was an enormous trauma to our country. The fear and anger that it provoked was understandable, but in some cases, it led us to act contrary to our traditions and our ideals. We are taking concrete actions to change course. I have unequivocally prohibited the use of torture by the United States, and I have ordered the prison at Guantanamo Bay closed by early next year.

**BOE27**

So America will defend itself, respectful of the sovereignty of nations and the rule of law. And we will do so in partnership with Muslim communities which are also threatened. The sooner the extremists are isolated and unwelcome in Muslim communities, the sooner we will all be safer.

**BOE28**

The second major source of tension that we need to discuss is the situation between Israelis, Palestinians and the Arab world. America's strong bonds with Israel are well known. This bond is unbreakable. It is based upon cultural and historical ties, and the recognition that the aspiration for a Jewish homeland is rooted in a tragic history that cannot be denied.

**BOE29**

Around the world, the Jewish people were persecuted for centuries, and anti-Semitism in Europe culminated in an unprecedented Holocaust. Tomorrow, I will visit Buchenwald, which was part of a network of camps where Jews were enslaved, tortured, shot and gassed to death by the Third Reich. Six million Jews were killed—more than the entire Jewish population of Israel today. Denying that fact is baseless, it is ignorant, and it is hateful. Threatening Israel with destruction—or repeating vile stereotypes about Jews—is deeply wrong, and only serves to evoke in the minds of Israelis this most painful of memories while preventing the peace that the people of this region deserve.

**BOE30**

On the other hand, it is also undeniable that the Palestinian people—Muslims and Christians—have suffered in pursuit of a homeland. For more than sixty years they've endured the pain of dislocation. Many wait in refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza, and neighboring lands for a life of peace and security that they have never been able to lead. They endure the daily humiliations—large and small—

that come with occupation. So let there be no doubt: the situation for the Palestinian people is intolerable. And America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity, and a state of their own.

#### **BOE31**

For decades then, there has been a stalemate: two peoples with legitimate aspirations, each with a painful history that makes compromise elusive. It's easy to point fingers—for Palestinians to point to the displacement brought about by Israel's founding, and for Israelis to point to the constant hostility and attacks throughout its history from within its borders as well as beyond. But if we see this conflict only from one side or the other, then we will be blind to the truth: the only resolution is for the aspirations of both sides to be met through two states, where Israelis and Palestinians each live in peace and security. That is in Israel's interest, Palestine's interest, America's interest, and the world's interest. And that is why I intend to personally pursue this outcome with all the patience and dedication that the task requires. The obligations—the obligations that the parties have agreed to under the road map are clear. For peace to come, it is time for them—and all of us—to live up to our responsibilities.

#### **BOE32**

Palestinians must abandon violence. Resistance through violence and killing is wrong and it does not succeed. For centuries, black people in America suffered the lash of the whip as slaves and the humiliation of segregation. But it was not violence that won full and equal rights. It was a peaceful and determined insistence upon the ideals at the center of America's founding. This same story can be told by people from South Africa to South Asia; from Eastern Europe to Indonesia. It's a story with a simple truth: that violence is a dead end. It is a sign neither of courage nor power to shoot rockets at sleeping children, or to blow up old women on a bus. That's not how moral authority is claimed; that's how it is surrendered.

#### **BOE33**

Now is the time for Palestinians to focus on what they can build. The Palestinian Authority must develop its capacity to govern, with institutions that serve the needs of its people. Hamas does have support among some Palestinians, but they also have to recognize they have responsibilities. To play a role in fulfilling Palestinian aspirations, to unify the Palestinian people, Hamas must put an end to violence, recognize past agreements, recognize Israel's right to exist.

#### **BOE34**

At the same time, Israelis must acknowledge that just as Israel's right to exist cannot be denied, neither can Palestine's. The United States does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements. This construction violates previous agreements and undermines efforts to achieve peace. It is time for these settlements to stop.

#### **BOE35**

And Israel must also live up to its obligation to ensure that Palestinians can live and work and develop their society. Just as it devastates Palestinian families, the continuing humanitarian crisis in Gaza does not serve Israel's security; neither does the continuing lack of opportunity in the West Bank. Progress in the daily lives of the Palestinian people must be a critical part of a road to peace, and Israel must take concrete steps to enable such progress.

#### **BOE36**

And finally, the Arab states must recognize that the Arab Peace Initiative was an important beginning, but not the end of their responsibilities. The Arab-Israeli conflict should no longer be used to distract the people of Arab nations from other problems. Instead, it must be a cause for action to help the Palestinian people develop the institutions that will sustain their state, to recognize Israel's legitimacy, and to choose progress over a self-defeating focus on the past.

#### **BOE37**

America will align our policies with those who pursue peace, and we will say in public what we say in private to Israelis and Palestinians and Arabs. We cannot impose peace. But privately, many Muslims recognize that Israel will not go away. Likewise, many Israelis recognize the need for a Palestinian state. It is time for us to act on what everyone knows to be true.

**BOE38**

Too many tears have been shed. Too much blood has been shed. All of us have a responsibility to work for the dawn when the mothers of Israelis and Palestinians can see their children grow up without fear; when the Holy Land of the three great faiths is the place of peace that God intended it to be; when Jerusalem is a secure and lasting home for Jews and Christians and Muslims, and a place for all of the children of Abraham to mingle peacefully together as in the story of Isra—as in the story of Isra, when Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, peace be upon them, joined in prayer.

**BOE39**

The third source of tension is our shared interest in the rights and responsibilities of nations on nuclear weapons. This issue has been a source of tension between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran. For many years, Iran has defined itself in part by its opposition to my country, and there is in fact a tumultuous history between us. In the middle of the Cold War, the United States played a role in the overthrow of a democratically elected Iranian government. Since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has played a role in acts of hostage-taking and violence against U.S. troops and civilians. This history is well known. Rather than remain trapped in the past, I've made it clear to Iran's leaders and people that my country is prepared to move forward. The question now is not what Iran is against, but rather what future it wants to build.

**BOE40**

I recognize it will be hard to overcome decades of mistrust, but we will proceed with courage, rectitude, and resolve. There will be many issues to discuss between our two countries, and we are willing to move forward without preconditions on the basis of mutual respect. But it is clear to all concerned that when it comes to nuclear weapons, we have reached a decisive point. This is not simply about America's interests. It's about preventing a nuclear arms race in the Middle East that could lead this region and the world down a hugely dangerous path.

**BOE41**

I understand those who protest that some countries have weapons that others do not. No single nation should pick and choose which nation holds nuclear weapons. And that's why I strongly reaffirmed America's commitment to seek a world in which no nations hold nuclear weapons. And any nation—including Iran—should have the right to access peaceful nuclear power if it complies with its responsibilities under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. That commitment is at the core of the treaty, and it must be kept for all who fully abide by it. And I'm hopeful that all countries in the region can share in this goal.

**BOE42**

The fourth issue that I will address is democracy. I know—I know there has been controversy about the promotion of democracy in recent years, and much of this controversy is connected to the war in Iraq. So let me be clear: no system of government can or should be imposed by one nation by any other.

**BOE43**

That does not lessen my commitment, however, to governments that reflect the will of the people. Each nation gives life to this principle in its own way, grounded in the traditions of its own people. America does not presume to know what is best for everyone, just as we would not presume to pick the outcome of a peaceful election. But I do have an unyielding belief that all people yearn for certain things: the ability to speak your mind and have a say in how you are governed; confidence in the rule of law and the equal administration of justice; government that is transparent and doesn't steal from the people; the freedom to live as you choose. These are not just American ideas; they are human rights. And that is why we will support them everywhere.

**BOE44**

Now, there is no straight line to realize this promise. But this much is clear: governments that protect these rights are ultimately more stable, successful and secure. Suppressing ideas never succeeds in making them go away. America respects the right of all peaceful and law-abiding voices to be heard around the world, even if we disagree with them. And we will welcome all elected, peaceful governments—provided they govern with respect for all their people.



**BOE45**

This last point is important because there are some who advocate for democracy only when they're out of power; once in power, they are ruthless in suppressing the rights of others. So no matter where it takes hold, government of the people and by the people sets a single standard for all who would hold power: You must maintain your power through consent, not coercion; you must respect the rights of minorities, and participate with a spirit of tolerance and compromise; you must place the interests of your people and the legitimate workings of the political process above your party. Without these ingredients, elections alone do not make true democracy.

**BOE46**

The fifth issue that we must address together is religious freedom. Islam has a proud tradition of tolerance. We see it in the history of Andalusia and Cordoba during the Inquisition. I saw it firsthand as a child in Indonesia, where devout Christians worshiped freely in an overwhelmingly Muslim country. That is the spirit we need today. People in every country should be free to choose and live their faith based upon the persuasion of the mind and the heart and the soul. This tolerance is essential for religion to thrive, but it's being challenged in many different ways.

**BOE47**

Among some Muslims, there's a disturbing tendency to measure one's own faith by the rejection of somebody else's faith. The richness of religious diversity must be upheld—whether it is for Maronites in Lebanon or the Copts in Egypt. And if we are being honest, fault lines must be closed among Muslims, as well, as the divisions between Sunni and Shia have led to tragic violence, particularly in Iraq.

**BOE48**

Freedom of religion is central to the ability of peoples to live together. We must always examine the ways in which we protect it. For instance, in the United States, rules on charitable giving have made it harder for Muslims to fulfill their religious obligation. That's why I'm committed to working with American Muslims to ensure that they can fulfill zakat.

**BOE49**

Likewise, it is important for Western countries to avoid impeding Muslim citizens from practicing religion as they see fit—for instance, by dictating what clothes a Muslim woman should wear. We can't disguise hostility towards any religion behind the pretense of liberalism.

**BOE50**

In fact, faith should bring us together. And that's why we're forging service projects in America to bring together Christians, Muslims, and Jews. That's why we welcome efforts like Saudi Arabian King Abdullah's interfaith dialogue and Turkey's leadership in the Alliance of Civilizations. Around the world, we can turn dialogue into interfaith service, so bridges between peoples lead to action—whether it is combating malaria in Africa, or providing relief after a natural disaster.

**BOE51**

The sixth issue that I want to address is women's rights. I know and you can tell from this audience, that there is a healthy debate about this issue. I reject the view of some in the West that a woman who chooses to cover her hair is somehow less equal, but I do believe that a woman who is denied an education is denied equality. And it is no coincidence that countries where women are well educated are far more likely to be prosperous.

**BOE52**

Now, let me be clear: issues of women's equality are by no means simply an issue for Islam. In Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, we've seen Muslim-majority countries elect a woman to lead. Meanwhile, the struggle for women's equality continues in many aspects of American life, and in countries around the world.

**BOE53**

I am convinced that our daughters can contribute just as much to society as our sons. Our common prosperity will be advanced by allowing all humanity—men and women—to reach their full potential. I do not believe that women must make the same choices as men in order to be equal, and I respect those women who choose to live their lives in traditional roles. But it should be their choice. And that is why

the United States will partner with any Muslim-majority country to support expanded literacy for girls, and to help young women pursue employment through micro-financing that helps people live their dreams.

**BOE54**

Finally, I want to discuss economic development and opportunity. I know that for many, the face of globalization is contradictory. The Internet and television can bring knowledge and information, but also offensive sexuality and mindless violence into the home. Trade can bring new wealth and opportunities, but also huge disruptions and change in communities. In all nations—including America—this change can bring fear. Fear that because of modernity we lose control over our economic choices, our politics, and most importantly our identities—those things we most cherish about our communities, our families, our traditions, and our faith.

**BOE55**

But I also know that human progress cannot be denied. There need not be contradictions between development and tradition. Countries like Japan and South Korea grew their economies enormously while maintaining distinct cultures. The same is true for the astonishing progress within Muslim-majority countries from Kuala Lumpur to Dubai. In ancient times and in our times, Muslim communities have been at the forefront of innovation and education.

**BOE56**

And this is important because no development strategy can be based only upon what comes out of the ground, nor can it be sustained while young people are out of work. Many Gulf states have enjoyed great wealth as a consequence of oil, and some are beginning to focus it on broader development. But all of us must recognize that education and innovation will be the currency of the twenty-first century—and in too many Muslim communities, there remains underinvestment in these areas. I'm emphasizing such investment within my own country. And while America in the past has focused on oil and gas when it comes to this part of the world, we now seek a broader engagement.

**BOE57**

On education, we will expand exchange programs, and increase scholarships, like the one that brought my father to America. At the same time, we will encourage more Americans to study in Muslim communities. And we will match promising Muslim students with internships in America; invest in online learning for teachers and children around the world; and create a new online network, so a young person in Kansas can communicate instantly with a young person in Cairo.

**BOE58**

On economic development, we will create a new corps of business volunteers to partner with counterparts in Muslim-majority countries. And I will host a Summit on Entrepreneurship this year to identify how we can deepen ties between business leaders, foundations and social entrepreneurs in the United States and Muslim communities around the world.

**BOE59**

On science and technology, we will launch a new fund to support technological development in Muslim-majority countries, and to help transfer ideas to the marketplace so they can create more jobs. We'll open centers of scientific excellence in Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and appoint new science envoys to collaborate on programs that develop new sources of energy, create green jobs, digitize records, clean water, grow new crops. Today I'm announcing a new global effort with the Organization of the Islamic Conference to eradicate polio. And we will also expand partnerships with Muslim communities to promote child and maternal health.

**BOE60**

All these things must be done in partnership. Americans are ready to join with citizens and governments; community organizations, religious leaders, and businesses in Muslim communities around the world to help our people pursue a better life.

**BOE61**

The issues that I have described will not be easy to address. But we have a responsibility to join together on behalf of the world that we seek—a world where extremists no longer threaten our people, and

American troops have come home; a world where Israelis and Palestinians are each secure in a state of their own, and nuclear energy is used for peaceful purposes; a world where governments serve their citizens, and the rights of all God's children are respected. Those are mutual interests. That is the world we seek. But we can only achieve it together.

#### **BOE62**

I know there are many—Muslim and non-Muslim—who question whether we can forge this new beginning. Some are eager to stoke the flames of division, and to stand in the way of progress. Some suggest that it isn't worth the effort—that we are fated to disagree, and civilizations are doomed to clash. Many more are simply skeptical that real change can occur. There's so much fear, so much mistrust that has built up over the years. But if we choose to be bound by the past, we will never move forward. And I want to particularly say this to young people of every faith, in every country—you, more than anyone, have the ability to re-imagine the world, to remake this world.

#### **BOE63**

All of us share this world for but a brief moment in time. The question is whether we spend that time focused on what pushes us apart, or whether we commit ourselves to an effort—a sustained effort—to find common ground, to focus on the future we seek for our children, and to respect the dignity of all human beings.

#### **BOE64**

It's easier to start wars than to end them. It's easier to blame others than to look inward. It's easier to see what is different about someone than to find the things we share. But we should choose the right path, not just the easy path. There's one rule that lies at the heart of every religion—that we do unto others as we would have them do unto us. This truth transcends nations and peoples—a belief that isn't new; that isn't black or white or brown; that isn't Christian or Muslim or Jew. It's a belief that pulsed in the cradle of civilization, and that still beats in the hearts of billions around the world. It's a faith in other people, and it's what brought me here today.

#### **BOE65**

We have the power to make the world we seek, but only if we have the courage to make a new beginning, keeping in mind what has been written. The Holy Koran tells us: "O mankind! We have created you male and a female; and we have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another." The Talmud tells us: "The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace." The Holy Bible tells us: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." The people of the world can live together in peace. We know that is God's vision. Now that must be our work here on Earth.

#### **BOE66**

Thank you. And may God's peace be upon you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

## **Appendix-II: Speech by President Barack Obama on U.S. Policy in the Middle East and North Africa, State Department, Washington, DC**

(May 19, 2011; Source: *The White House*; [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) )

#### **BO-USPMENA1**

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. Please, have a seat. Thank you very much. I want to begin by thanking Hillary Clinton, who has travelled so much these last six months that she is approaching a new landmark—one million frequent flyer miles. I count on Hillary every single day, and I believe that she will go down as one of the finest Secretaries of State in our nation's history.

#### **BO-USPMENA2**

The State Department is a fitting venue to mark a new chapter in American diplomacy. For six months, we have witnessed an extraordinary change taking place in the Middle East and North Africa. Square by square, town by town, country by country, the people have risen up to demand their basic human rights. Two leaders have stepped aside. More may follow. And though these countries may be a great distance

from our shores, we know that our own future is bound to this region by the forces of economics and security, by history and by faith. Today, I want to talk about this change—the forces that are driving it and how we can respond in a way that advances our values and strengthens our security.

### **BO-USPMENA3**

Now, already, we've done much to shift our foreign policy following a decade defined by two costly conflicts. After years of war in Iraq, we've removed 100,000 American troops and ended our combat mission there. In Afghanistan, we've broken the Taliban's momentum, and this July we will begin to bring our troops home and continue a transition to Afghan lead. And after years of war against Al-Qaeda and its affiliates, we have dealt Al-Qaeda a huge blow by killing its leader, Osama bin Laden.

### **BO-USPMENA4**

Bin Laden was no martyr. He was a mass murderer who offered a message of hate—an insistence that Muslims had to take up arms against the West, and that violence against men, women and children was the only path to change. He rejected democracy and individual rights for Muslims in favor of violent extremism; his agenda focused on what he could destroy—not what he could build. Bin Laden and his murderous vision won some adherents. But even before his death, Al-Qaeda was losing its struggle for relevance, as the overwhelming majority of people saw that the slaughter of innocents did not answer their cries for a better life. By the time we found bin Laden, Al-Qaeda's agenda had come to be seen by the vast majority of the region as a dead end, and the people of the Middle East and North Africa had taken their future into their own hands.

### **BO-USPMENA5**

That story of self-determination began six months ago in Tunisia. On December 17th, a young vendor named Mohammed Bouazizi was devastated when a police officer confiscated his cart. This was not unique. It's the same kind of humiliation that takes place every day in many parts of the world—the relentless tyranny of governments that deny their citizens dignity. Only this time, something different happened. After local officials refused to hear his complaints, this young man, who had never been particularly active in politics, went to the headquarters of the provincial government, doused himself in fuel, and lit himself on fire.

### **BO-USPMENA6**

There are times in the course of history when the actions of ordinary citizens spark movements for change because they speak to a longing for freedom that has been building up for years. In America, think of the defiance of those patriots in Boston who refused to pay taxes to a King, or the dignity of Rosa Parks as she sat courageously in her seat. So it was in Tunisia, as that vendor's act of desperation tapped into the frustration felt throughout the country. Hundreds of protesters took to the streets, then thousands. And in the face of batons and sometimes bullets, they refused to go home—day after day, week after week—until a dictator of more than two decades finally left power.

### **BO-USPMENA7**

The story of this revolution, and the ones that followed, should not have come as a surprise. The nations of the Middle East and North Africa won their independence long ago, but in too many places their people did not. In too many countries, power has been concentrated in the hands of a few. In too many countries, a citizen like that young vendor had nowhere to turn—no honest judiciary to hear his case; no independent media to give him voice; no credible political party to represent his views; no free and fair election where he could choose his leader.

### **BO-USPMENA8**

And this lack of self-determination—the chance to make your life what you will—has applied to the region's economy as well. Yes, some nations are blessed with wealth in oil and gas, and that has led to pockets of prosperity. But in a global economy based on knowledge, based on innovation, no development strategy can be based solely upon what comes out of the ground. Nor can people reach their potential when you cannot start a business without paying a bribe.

### **BO-USPMENA9**

In the face of these challenges, too many leaders in the region tried to direct their people's grievances elsewhere. The West was blamed as the source of all ills, a half-century after the end of colonialism.

Antagonism toward Israel became the only acceptable outlet for political expression. Divisions of tribe, ethnicity and religious sect were manipulated as a means of holding on to power, or taking it away from somebody else.

#### **BO-USPMENA10**

But the events of the past six months show us that strategies of repression and strategies of diversion will not work anymore. Satellite television and the Internet provide a window into the wider world—a world of astonishing progress in places like India and Indonesia and Brazil. Cell phones and social networks allow young people to connect and organize like never before. And so a new generation has emerged. And their voices tell us that change cannot be denied.

#### **BO-USPMENA11**

In Cairo, we heard the voice of the young mother who said, “It’s like I can finally breathe fresh air for the first time.” In Sanaa, we heard the students who chanted, “The night must come to an end.” In Benghazi, we heard the engineer who said, “Our words are free now. It’s a feeling you can’t explain.” In Damascus, we heard the young man who said, “After the first yelling, the first shout, you feel dignity.”

#### **BO-USPMENA12**

Those shouts of human dignity are being heard across the region. And through the moral force of nonviolence, the people of the region have achieved more change in six months than terrorists have accomplished in decades. Of course, change of this magnitude does not come easily. In our day and age—a time of twenty-four-hour news cycles and constant communication—people expect the transformation of the region to be resolved in a matter of weeks. But it will be years before this story reaches its end. Along the way, there will be good days and there will be bad days. In some places, change will be swift; in others, gradual. And as we’ve already seen, calls for change may give way, in some cases, to fierce contests for power.

#### **BO-USPMENA13**

The question before us is what role America will play as this story unfolds. For decades, the United States has pursued a set of core interests in the region: countering terrorism and stopping the spread of nuclear weapons; securing the free flow of commerce and safe-guarding the security of the region; standing up for Israel’s security and pursuing Arab-Israeli peace.

#### **BO-USPMENA14**

We will continue to do these things, with the firm belief that America’s interests are not hostile to people’s hopes; they’re essential to them. We believe that no one benefits from a nuclear arms race in the region, or Al-Qaeda’s brutal attacks. We believe people everywhere would see their economies crippled by a cut-off in energy supplies. As we did in the Gulf War, we will not tolerate aggression across borders, and we will keep our commitments to friends and partners.

#### **BO-USPMENA15**

Yet we must acknowledge that a strategy based solely upon the narrow pursuit of these interests will not fill an empty stomach or allow someone to speak their mind. Moreover, failure to speak to the broader aspirations of ordinary people will only feed the suspicion that has festered for years that the United States pursues our interests at their expense. Given that this mistrust runs both ways—as Americans have been seared by hostage-taking and violent rhetoric and terrorist attacks that have killed thousands of our citizens—a failure to change our approach threatens a deepening spiral of division between the United States and the Arab world.

#### **BO-USPMENA14**

And that’s why, two years ago in Cairo, I began to broaden our engagement based upon mutual interests and mutual respect. I believed then—and I believe now—that we have a stake not just in the stability of nations, but in the self-determination of individuals. The status quo is not sustainable. Societies held together by fear and repression may offer the illusion of stability for a time, but they are built upon fault lines that will eventually tear asunder.

#### **BO-USPMENA15**

So we face a historic opportunity. We have the chance to show that America values the dignity of the street vendor in Tunisia more than the raw power of the dictator. There must be no doubt that the United

States of America welcomes change that advances self-determination and opportunity. Yes, there will be perils that accompany this moment of promise. But after decades of accepting the world as it is in the region, we have a chance to pursue the world as it should be.

**BO-USPMENA16**

Of course, as we do, we must proceed with a sense of humility. It's not America that put people into the streets of Tunis or Cairo—it was the people themselves who launched these movements, and it's the people themselves that must ultimately determine their outcome.

**BO-USPMENA17**

Not every country will follow our particular form of representative democracy, and there will be times when our short-term interests don't align perfectly with our long-term vision for the region. But we can, and we will, speak out for a set of core principles—principles that have guided our response to the events over the past six months:

**BO-USPMENA18**

The United States opposes the use of violence and repression against the people of the region.

**BO-USPMENA19**

The United States supports a set of universal rights. And these rights include free speech, the freedom of peaceful assembly, the freedom of religion, equality for men and women under the rule of law, and the right to choose your own leaders—whether you live in Baghdad or Damascus, Sanaa or Tehran.

**BO-USPMENA20**

And we support political and economic reform in the Middle East and North Africa that can meet the legitimate aspirations of ordinary people throughout the region.

**BO-USPMENA21**

Our support for these principles is not a secondary interest. Today I want to make it clear that it is a top priority that must be translated into concrete actions, and supported by all of the diplomatic, economic and strategic tools at our disposal.

**BO-USPMENA22**

Let me be specific. First, it will be the policy of the United States to promote reform across the region, and to support transitions to democracy. That effort begins in Egypt and Tunisia, where the stakes are high—as Tunisia was at the vanguard of this democratic wave, and Egypt is both a longstanding partner and the Arab world's largest nation. Both nations can set a strong example through free and fair elections, a vibrant civil society, accountable and effective democratic institutions, and responsible regional leadership. But our support must also extend to nations where transitions have yet to take place.

**BO-USPMENA23**

Unfortunately, in too many countries, calls for change have thus far been answered by violence. The most extreme example is Libya, where Muammar Gadhafi launched a war against his own people, promising to hunt them down like rats. As I said when the United States joined an international coalition to intervene, we cannot prevent every injustice perpetrated by a regime against its people, and we have learned from our experience in Iraq just how costly and difficult it is to try to impose regime change by force—no matter how well-intentioned it may be.

**BO-USPMENA24**

But in Libya, we saw the prospect of imminent massacre, we had a mandate for action, and heard the Libyan people's call for help. Had we not acted along with our NATO allies and regional coalition partners, thousands would have been killed. The message would have been clear: Keep power by killing as many people as it takes. Now, time is working against Gadhafi. He does not have control over his country. The opposition has organized a legitimate and credible Interim Council. And when Gadhafi inevitably leaves or is forced from power, decades of provocation will come to an end, and the transition to a democratic Libya can proceed.

**BO-USPMENA25**

While Libya has faced violence on the greatest scale, it's not the only place where leaders have turned to repression to remain in power. Most recently, the Syrian regime has chosen the path of murder and the mass arrests of its citizens. The United States has condemned these actions, and working with the

international community we have stepped up our sanctions on the Syrian regime—including sanctions announced yesterday on President Assad and those around him.

**BO-USPMENA26**

The Syrian people have shown their courage in demanding a transition to democracy. President Assad now has a choice: He can lead that transition, or get out of the way. The Syrian government must stop shooting demonstrators and allow peaceful protests. It must release political prisoners and stop unjust arrests. It must allow human rights monitors to have access to cities like Daraa; and start a serious dialogue to advance a democratic transition. Otherwise, President Assad and his regime will continue to be challenged from within and will continue to be isolated abroad.

**BO-USPMENA27**

So far, Syria has followed its Iranian ally, seeking assistance from Tehran in the tactics of suppression. And this speaks to the hypocrisy of the Iranian regime, which says it stand for the rights of protesters abroad, yet represses its own people at home. Let's remember that the first peaceful protests in the region were in the streets of Tehran, where the government brutalized women and men, and threw innocent people into jail. We still hear the chants echo from the rooftops of Tehran. The image of a young woman dying in the streets is still seared in our memory. And we will continue to insist that the Iranian people deserve their universal rights, and a government that does not smother their aspirations.

**BO-USPMENA28**

Now, our opposition to Iran's intolerance and Iran's repressive measures, as well as its illicit nuclear program and its support of terror, is well known. But if America is to be credible, we must acknowledge that at times our friends in the region have not all reacted to the demands for consistent change—with change that's consistent with the principles that I've outlined today. That's true in Yemen, where President Saleh needs to follow through on his commitment to transfer power. And that's true today in Bahrain.

**BO-USPMENA29**

Bahrain is a longstanding partner, and we are committed to its security. We recognize that Iran has tried to take advantage of the turmoil there, and that the Bahraini government has a legitimate interest in the rule of law.

**BO-USPMENA30**

Nevertheless, we have insisted both publicly and privately that mass arrests and brute force are at odds with the universal rights of Bahrain's citizens, and we will—and such steps will not make legitimate calls for reform go away. The only way forward is for the government and opposition to engage in a dialogue, and you can't have a real dialogue when parts of the peaceful opposition are in jail. The government must create the conditions for dialogue, and the opposition must participate to forge a just future for all Bahrainis.

**BO-USPMENA31**

Indeed, one of the broader lessons to be drawn from this period is that sectarian divides need not lead to conflict. In Iraq, we see the promise of a multiethnic, multi-sectarian democracy. The Iraqi people have rejected the perils of political violence in favor of a democratic process, even as they've taken full responsibility for their own security. Of course, like all new democracies, they will face setbacks. But Iraq is poised to play a key role in the region if it continues its peaceful progress. And as they do, we will be proud to stand with them as a steadfast partner.

**BO-USPMENA32**

So in the months ahead, America must use all our influence to encourage reform in the region. Even as we acknowledge that each country is different, we need to speak honestly about the principles that we believe in, with friend and foe alike. Our message is simple: if you take the risks that reform entails, you will have the full support of the United States.

**BO-USPMENA33**

We must also build on our efforts to broaden our engagement beyond elites, so that we reach the people who will shape the future—particularly young people. We will continue to make good on the commitments that I made in Cairo—to build networks of entrepreneurs and expand exchanges in

education, to foster cooperation in science and technology, and combat disease. Across the region, we intend to provide assistance to civil society, including those that may not be officially sanctioned, and who speak uncomfortable truths. And we will use the technology to connect with—and listen to—the voices of the people.

#### **BO-USPMENA34**

For the fact is, real reform does not come at the ballot box alone. Through our efforts we must support those basic rights to speak your mind and access information. We will support open access to the Internet, and the right of journalists to be heard—whether it’s a big news organization or a lone blogger. In the twenty-first century, information is power, the truth cannot be hidden, and the legitimacy of governments will ultimately depend on active and informed citizens.

#### **BO-USPMENA35**

Such open discourse is important even if what is said does not square with our worldview. Let me be clear, America respects the right of all peaceful and law-abiding voices to be heard, even if we disagree with them. And sometimes we profoundly disagree with them.

#### **BO-USPMENA36**

We look forward to working with all who embrace genuine and inclusive democracy. What we will **oppose** is an attempt by any group to restrict the rights of others, and to hold power through coercion and not consent. Because democracy depends not only on elections, but also strong and accountable institutions, and the respect for the rights of minorities.

#### **BO-USPMENA37**

Such tolerance is particularly important when it comes to religion. In Tahrir Square, we heard Egyptians from all walks of life chant, “Muslims, Christians, we are one.” America will work to see that this spirit prevails—that all faiths are respected, and that bridges are built among them. In a region that was the birthplace of three world religions, intolerance can lead only to suffering and stagnation. And for this season of change to succeed, Coptic Christians must have the right to worship freely in Cairo, just as Shia must never have their mosques destroyed in Bahrain.

#### **BO-USPMENA38**

What is true for religious minorities is also true when it comes to the rights of women. History shows that countries are more prosperous and more peaceful when women are empowered. And that’s why we will continue to insist that universal rights apply to women as well as men—by focusing assistance on child and maternal health; by helping women to teach, or start a business; by standing up for the right of women to have their voices heard, and to run for office. The region will never reach its full potential when more than half of its population is prevented from achieving their full potential.

#### **BO-USPMENA39**

Now, even as we promote political reform, even as we promote human rights in the region, our efforts can’t stop there. So the second way that we must support positive change in the region is through our efforts to advance economic development for nations that are transitioning to democracy.

#### **BO-USPMENA40**

After all, politics alone has not put protesters into the streets. The tipping point for so many people is the more constant concern of putting food on the table and providing for a family. Too many people in the region wake up with few expectations other than making it through the day, perhaps hoping that their luck will change. Throughout the region, many young people have a solid education, but closed economies leave them unable to find a job. Entrepreneurs are brimming with ideas, but corruption leaves them unable to profit from those ideas.

#### **BO-USPMENA41**

The greatest untapped resource in the Middle East and North Africa is the talent of its people. In the recent protests, we see that talent on display, as people harness technology to move the world. It’s no coincidence that one of the leaders of Tahrir Square was an executive for Google. That energy now needs to be channeled, in country after country, so that economic growth can solidify the accomplishments of the street. For just as democratic revolutions can be triggered by a lack of individual opportunity, successful democratic transitions depend upon an expansion of growth and broad-based prosperity.



**BO-USPMENA42**

So, drawing from what we've learned around the world, we think it's important to focus on trade, not just aid; on investment, not just assistance. The goal must be a model in which protectionism gives way to openness, the reigns of commerce pass from the few to the many, and the economy generates jobs for the young. America's support for democracy will therefore be based on ensuring financial stability, promoting reform, and integrating competitive markets with each other and the global economy. And we're going to start with Tunisia and Egypt.

**BO-USPMENA43**

First, we've asked the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to present a plan at next week's G8 summit for what needs to be done to stabilize and modernize the economies of Tunisia and Egypt. Together, we must help them recover from the disruptions of their democratic upheaval, and support the governments that will be elected later this year. And we are urging other countries to help Egypt and Tunisia meet its near-term financial needs.

**BO-USPMENA44**

Second, we do not want a democratic Egypt to be saddled by the debts of its past. So we will relieve a democratic Egypt of up to \$1 billion in debt, and work with our Egyptian partners to invest these resources to foster growth and entrepreneurship. We will help Egypt regain access to markets by guaranteeing \$1 billion in borrowing that is needed to finance infrastructure and job creation. And we will help newly democratic governments recover assets that were stolen.

**BO-USPMENA45**

Third, we're working with Congress to create Enterprise Funds to invest in Tunisia and Egypt. And these will be modeled on funds that supported the transitions in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall. OPIC [Overseas Private Investment Corporation] will soon launch a \$2 billion facility to support private investment across the region. And we will work with the allies to refocus the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development so that it provides the same support for democratic transitions and economic modernization in the Middle East and North Africa as it has in Europe.

**BO-USPMENA46**

Fourth, the United States will launch a comprehensive Trade and Investment Partnership Initiative in the Middle East and North Africa. If you take out oil exports, this entire region of over 400 million people exports roughly the same amount as Switzerland. So we will work with the EU to facilitate more trade within the region, build on existing agreements to promote integration with U.S. and European markets, and open the door for those countries who adopt high standards of reform and trade liberalization to construct a regional trade arrangement. And just as EU membership served as an incentive for reform in Europe, so should the vision of a modern and prosperous economy create a powerful force for reform in the Middle East and North Africa.

**BO-USPMENA47**

Prosperity also requires tearing down walls that stand in the way of progress—the corruption of elites who steal from their people; the red tape that stops an idea from becoming a business; the patronage that distributes wealth based on tribe or sect. We will help governments meet international obligations, and invest efforts at anti-corruption—by working with parliamentarians who are developing reforms, and activists who use technology to increase transparency and hold government accountable. Politics and human rights; economic reform.

**BO-USPMENA48**

Let me conclude by talking about another cornerstone of our approach to the region, and that relates to the pursuit of peace. For decades, the conflict between Israelis and Arabs has cast a shadow over the region. For Israelis, it has meant living with the fear that their children could be blown up on a bus or by rockets fired at their homes, as well as the pain of knowing that other children in the region are taught to hate them. For Palestinians, it has meant suffering the humiliation of occupation, and never living in a nation of their own. Moreover, this conflict has come with a larger cost to the Middle East, as it impedes partnerships that could bring greater security and prosperity and empowerment to ordinary people.

**BO-USPMENA49**

For over two years, my administration has worked with the parties and the international community to end this conflict, building on decades of work by previous administrations. Yet expectations have gone unmet. Israeli settlement activity continues. Palestinians have walked away from talks. The world looks at a conflict that has grinded on and on and on, and sees nothing but stalemate. Indeed, there are those who argue that with all the change and uncertainty in the region, it is simply not possible to move forward now. I disagree. At a time when the people of the Middle East and North Africa are casting off the burdens of the past, the drive for a lasting peace that ends the conflict and resolves all claims is more urgent than ever. That's certainly true for the two parties involved.

**BO-USPMENA50**

For the Palestinians, efforts to delegitimize Israel will end in failure. Symbolic actions to isolate Israel at the United Nations in September won't create an independent state. Palestinian leaders will not achieve peace or prosperity if Hamas insists on a path of terror and rejection. And Palestinians will never realize their independence by denying the right of Israel to exist.

**BO-USPMENA51**

As for Israel, our friendship is rooted deeply in a shared history and shared values. Our commitment to Israel's security is unshakeable. And we will stand against attempts to single it out for criticism in international forums. But precisely because of our friendship, it's important that we tell the truth: The status quo is unsustainable, and Israel too must act boldly to advance a lasting peace.

**BO-USPMENA52**

The fact is, a growing number of Palestinians live west of the Jordan River. Technology will make it harder for Israel to defend itself. A region undergoing profound change will lead to populism in which millions of people—not just one or two leaders—must believe peace is possible. The international community is tired of an endless process that never produces an outcome. The dream of a Jewish and democratic state cannot be fulfilled with permanent occupation.

**BO-USPMENA53**

Now, ultimately, it is up to the Israelis and Palestinians to take action. No peace can be imposed upon them—not by the United States; not by anybody else. But endless delay won't make the problem go away. What America and the international community can do is to state frankly what everyone knows—a lasting peace will involve two states for two peoples: Israel as a Jewish state and the homeland for the Jewish people, and the state of Palestine as the homeland for the Palestinian people, each state enjoying self-determination, mutual recognition, and peace.

**BO-USPMENA54**

So while the core issues of the conflict must be negotiated, the basis of those negotiations is clear: a viable Palestine, a secure Israel. The United States believes that negotiations should result in two states, with permanent Palestinian borders with Israel, Jordan, and Egypt, and permanent Israeli borders with Palestine. We believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps, so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states. The Palestinian people must have the right to govern themselves, and reach their full potential, in a sovereign and contiguous state.

**BO-USPMENA55**

As for security, every state has the right to self-defense, and Israel must be able to defend itself—by itself—against any threat. Provisions must also be robust enough to prevent a resurgence of terrorism, to stop the infiltration of weapons, and to provide effective border security. The full and phased withdrawal of Israeli military forces should be coordinated with the assumption of Palestinian security responsibility in a sovereign, non-militarized state. And the duration of this transition period must be agreed, and the effectiveness of security arrangements must be demonstrated.

**BO-USPMENA56**

These principles provide a foundation for negotiations. Palestinians should know the territorial outlines of their state; Israelis should know that their basic security concerns will be met. I'm aware that these steps alone will not resolve the conflict, because two wrenching and emotional issues will remain: the future of

Jerusalem, and the fate of Palestinian refugees. But moving forward now on the basis of territory and security provides a foundation to resolve those two issues in a way that is just and fair, and that respects the rights and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians.

**BO-USPMENA57**

Now, let me say this: recognizing that negotiations need to begin with the issues of territory and security does not mean that it will be easy to come back to the table. In particular, the recent announcement of an agreement between Fatah and Hamas raises profound and legitimate questions for Israel: how can one negotiate with a party that has shown itself unwilling to recognize your right to exist? And in the weeks and months to come, Palestinian leaders will have to provide a credible answer to that question. Meanwhile, the United States, our Quartet partners, and the Arab states will need to continue every effort to get beyond the current impasse.

**BO-USPMENA58**

I recognize how hard this will be. Suspicion and hostility has been passed on for generations, and at times it has hardened. But I'm convinced that the majority of Israelis and Palestinians would rather look to the future than be trapped in the past. We see that spirit in the Israeli father whose son was killed by Hamas, who helped start an organization that brought together Israelis and Palestinians who had lost loved ones. That father said, "I gradually realized that the only hope for progress was to recognize the face of the conflict." We see it in the actions of a Palestinian who lost three daughters to Israeli shells in Gaza. "I have the right to feel angry," he said. "So many people were expecting me to hate. My answer to them is I shall not hate. Let us hope," he said, "for tomorrow."

**BO-USPMENA59**

That is the choice that must be made—not simply in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but across the entire region—a choice between hate and hope; between the shackles of the past and the promise of the future. It's a choice that must be made by leaders and by the people, and it's a choice that will define the future of a region that served as the cradle of civilization and a crucible of strife.

**BO-USPMENA60**

For all the challenges that lie ahead, we see many reasons to be hopeful. In Egypt, we see it in the efforts of young people who led protests. In Syria, we see it in the courage of those who brave bullets while chanting, "peaceful, peaceful." In Benghazi, a city threatened with destruction, we see it in the courthouse square where people gather to celebrate the freedoms that they had never known. Across the region, those rights that we take for granted are being claimed with joy by those who are prying loose the grip of an iron fist.

**BO-USPMENA61**

For the American people, the scenes of upheaval in the region may be unsettling, but the forces driving it are not unfamiliar. Our own nation was founded through a rebellion against an empire. Our people fought a painful Civil War that extended freedom and dignity to those who were enslaved. And I would not be standing here today unless past generations turned to the moral force of nonviolence as a way to perfect our union—organizing, marching, protesting peacefully together to make real those words that declared our nation: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

**BO-USPMENA62**

Those words must guide our response to the change that is transforming the Middle East and North Africa—words which tell us that repression will fail, and that tyrants will fall, and that every man and woman is endowed with certain inalienable rights.

**BO-USPMENA63**

It will not be easy. There's no straight line to progress, and hardship always accompanies a season of hope. But the United States of America was founded on the belief that people should govern themselves. And now we cannot hesitate to stand squarely on the side of those who are reaching for their rights, knowing that their success will bring about a world that is more peaceful, more stable, and more just.

**BO-USPMENA64**

**Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.**

## **Appendix-III: Speech by President Barack Obama, American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) Policy Conference, Washington, DC**

(March 4, 2012; *Source: The White House; [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)*)

### **BO-AIPAC1**

Thank you. Well, good morning, everyone. Rosy [AIPAC President Lee Rosenberg], thank you for your kind words. I have never seen Rosy on the basketball court. I'll bet it would be a treat. Rosy, you've been a dear friend of mine for a long time and a tireless advocate for the unbreakable bonds between Israel and the United States. And as you complete your term as president, I salute your leadership and your commitment.

I want to thank the board of directors. As always, I'm glad to see my longtime friends in the Chicago delegation. I also want to thank the members of Congress who are with us here today, and who will be speaking to you over the next few days. You've worked hard to maintain the partnership between the United States and Israel. And I especially want to thank my close friend and leader of the Democratic National Committee, Debbie Wasserman Schultz. I'm glad that my outstanding young ambassador to Israel, Dan Shapiro, is in the house. I understand that Dan is perfecting his Hebrew on his new assignment, and I appreciate his constant outreach to the Israeli people. And I'm also pleased that we're joined by so many Israeli officials, including Ambassador Michael Oren. And tomorrow, I'm very much looking forward to welcoming Prime Minister Netanyahu and his delegation back to the White House.

### **BO-AIPAC2**

Every time I come to AIPAC, I'm especially impressed to see so many young people here. You don't yet get the front seats—I understand. You have to earn that. But students from all over the country who are making their voices heard and engaging deeply in our democratic debate. You carry with you an extraordinary legacy of more than six decades of friendship between the United States and Israel. And you have the opportunity—and the responsibility—to make your own mark on the world. And for inspiration, you can look to the man who preceded me on this stage, who's being honored at this conference—my friend, President Shimon Peres.

### **BO-AIPAC3**

Shimon was born a world away from here, in a shtetl in what was then Poland, a few years after the end of the First World War. But his heart was always in Israel, the historic homeland of the Jewish people. And when he was just a boy he made his journey across land and sea—toward home. In his life, he has fought for Israel's independence, and he has fought for peace and security. As a member of the Haganah and a member of the Knesset, as a minister of defense and foreign affairs, as a prime minister and as president, Shimon helped build the nation that thrives today: the Jewish state of Israel. But beyond these extraordinary achievements, he has also been a powerful moral voice that reminds us that right makes might—not the other way around. Shimon once described the story of the Jewish people by saying it proved that, "slings, arrows and gas chambers can annihilate man, but cannot destroy human values, dignity, and freedom." And he has lived those values. He has taught us to ask more of ourselves and to empathize more with our fellow human beings. I am grateful for his life's work and his moral example. And I'm proud to announce that later this spring, I will invite Shimon Peres to the White House to present him with America's highest civilian honor—the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

### **BO-AIPAC4**

In many ways, this award is a symbol of the broader ties that bind our nations. The United States and Israel share interests, but we also share those human values that Shimon spoke about: a commitment to human dignity. A belief that freedom is a right that is given to all of God's children. An experience that shows us that democracy is the one and only form of government that can truly respond to the aspirations of citizens.

America's Founding Fathers understood this truth, just as Israel's founding generation did. President Truman put it well, describing his decision to formally recognize Israel only minutes after it declared independence. He said, "I had faith in Israel before it was established. I believe it has a glorious future

before it—as not just another sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals of our civilization.”

For over six decades, the American people have kept that faith. Yes, we are bound to Israel because of the interests that we share—in security for our communities, prosperity for our people, the new frontiers of science that can light the world. But ultimately it is our common ideals that provide the true foundation for our relationship. That is why America’s commitment to Israel has endured under Democratic and Republican presidents, and congressional leaders of both parties. In the United States, our support for Israel is bipartisan, and that is how it should stay.

#### **BO-AIPAC5**

AIPAC’s work continually nurtures this bond. And because of AIPAC’s effectiveness in carrying out its mission, you can expect that over the next several days, you will hear many fine words from elected officials describing their commitment to the U.S.-Israel relationship. But as you examine my commitment, you don’t just have to count on my words. You can look at my deeds. Because over the last three years, as president of the United States, I have kept my commitments to the state of Israel. At every crucial juncture—at every fork in the road—we have been there for Israel. Every single time.

#### **BO-AIPAC6**

Four years ago, I stood before you and said that, “Israel’s security is sacrosanct. It is non-negotiable.” That belief has guided my actions as president. The fact is my administration’s commitment to Israel’s security has been unprecedented. Our military and intelligence cooperation has never been closer. Our joint exercises and training have never been more robust. Despite a tough budget environment, our security assistance has increased every single year. We are investing in new capabilities. We’re providing Israel with more advanced technology—the types of products and systems that only go to our closest friends and allies. And make no mistake: We will do what it takes to preserve Israel’s qualitative military edge—because Israel must always have the ability to defend itself, by itself, against any threat.

#### **BO-AIPAC7**

This isn’t just about numbers on a balance sheet. As a senator, I spoke to Israeli troops on the Lebanese border. I visited with families who’ve known the terror of rocket fire in Sderot. And that’s why, as president, I have provided critical funding to deploy the Iron Dome system that has intercepted rockets that might have hit homes and hospitals and schools in that town and in others. Now our assistance is expanding Israel’s defensive capabilities, so that more Israelis can live free from the fear of rockets and ballistic missiles. Because no family, no citizen, should live in fear.

#### **BO-AIPAC8**

And just as we’ve been there with our security assistance, we’ve been there through our diplomacy. When the Goldstone report unfairly singled out Israel for criticism, we challenged it. When Israel was isolated in the aftermath of the flotilla incident, we supported them. When the Durban conference was commemorated, we boycotted it, and we will always reject the notion that Zionism is racism.

#### **BO-AIPAC9**

When one-sided resolutions are brought up at the Human Rights Council, we oppose them. When Israeli diplomats feared for their lives in Cairo, we intervened to save them. When there are efforts to boycott or divest from Israel, we will stand against them. And whenever an effort is made to delegitimize the state of Israel, my administration has opposed them. So there should not be a shred of doubt by now—when the chips are down, I have Israel’s back.

#### **BO-AIPAC10**

Which is why, if during this political season you hear some questions regarding my administration’s support for Israel, remember that it’s not backed up by the facts. And remember that the U.S.-Israel relationship is simply too important to be distorted by partisan politics. America’s national security is too important. Israel’s security is too important.

#### **BO-AIPAC11**

Of course, there are those who question not my security and diplomatic commitments, but rather my administration’s ongoing pursuit of peace between Israelis and Palestinians. So let me say this: I make no apologies for pursuing peace. Israel’s own leaders understand the necessity of peace. Prime Minister

Netanyahu, Defense Minister Barak, President Peres—each of them have called for two states, a secure Israel that lives side by side with an independent Palestinian state. I believe that peace is profoundly in Israel’s security interest.

**BO-AIPAC12**

The reality that Israel faces—from shifting demographics, to emerging technologies, to an extremely difficult international environment—demands a resolution of this issue. And I believe that peace with the Palestinians is consistent with Israel’s founding values—because of our shared belief in self-determination, and because Israel’s place as a Jewish and democratic state must be protected.

**BO-AIPAC13**

Of course, peace is hard to achieve. There’s a reason why it’s remained elusive for six decades. The upheaval and uncertainty in Israel’s neighborhood makes it that much harder—from the horrific violence raging in Syria, to the transition in Egypt. And the division within the Palestinian leadership makes it harder still—most notably, with Hamas’s continued rejection of Israel’s very right to exist.

**BO-AIPAC14**

But as hard as it may be, we should not and cannot give in to cynicism or despair. The changes taking place in the region make peace more important, not less. And I’ve made it clear that there will be no lasting peace unless Israel’s security concerns are met. That’s why we continue to press Arab leaders to reach out to Israel, and will continue to support the peace treaty with Egypt. That’s why—just as we encourage Israel to be resolute in the pursuit of peace—we have continued to insist that any Palestinian partner must recognize Israel’s right to exist and reject violence and adhere to existing agreements. And that is why my administration has consistently rejected any efforts to short-cut negotiations or impose an agreement on the parties.

**BO-AIPAC15**

As Rosy noted, last year, I stood before you and pledged that, “the United States will stand up against efforts to single Israel out at the United Nations.” As you know, that pledge has been kept. Last September, I stood before the United Nations General Assembly and reaffirmed that any lasting peace must acknowledge the fundamental legitimacy of Israel and its security concerns. I said that America’s commitment to Israel’s security is unshakeable, our friendship with Israel is enduring and that Israel must be recognized. No American president has made such a clear statement about our support for Israel at the United Nations at such a difficult time. People usually give those speeches before audiences like this one—not before the General Assembly.

**BO-AIPAC16**

And I must say, there was not a lot of applause. But it was the right thing to do. And as a result, today there is no doubt—anywhere in the world—that the United States will insist upon Israel’s security and legitimacy. That will be true as we continue our efforts to pursue—in the pursuit of peace. And that will be true when it comes to the issue that is such a focus for all of us today: Iran’s nuclear program—a threat that has the potential to bring together the worst rhetoric about Israel’s destruction with the world’s most dangerous weapons.

**BO-AIPAC17**

Let’s begin with a basic truth that you all understand: no Israeli government can tolerate a nuclear weapon in the hands of a regime that denies the Holocaust, threatens to wipe Israel off the map and sponsors terrorist groups committed to Israel’s destruction. And so I understand the profound historical obligation that weighs on the shoulders of Bibi Netanyahu and Ehud Barak and all of Israel’s leaders.

**BO-AIPAC18**

A nuclear-armed Iran is completely counter to Israel’s security interests. But it is also counter to the national security interests of the United States.

**BO-AIPAC19**

Indeed, the entire world has an interest in preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. A nuclear-armed Iran would thoroughly undermine the nonproliferation regime that we’ve done so much to build. There are risks that an Iranian nuclear weapon could fall into the hands of a terrorist organization. It is almost certain that others in the region would feel compelled to get their own nuclear weapon, triggering

an arms race in one of the world's most volatile regions. It would embolden a regime that has brutalized its own people, and it would embolden Iran's proxies, who have carried out terrorist attacks from the Levant to southwest Asia.

**BO-AIPAC20**

And that is why, four years ago, I made a commitment to the American people and said that we would use all elements of American power to pressure Iran and prevent it from acquiring a nuclear weapon. And that is what we have done.

**BO-AIPAC21**

When I took office, the efforts to apply pressure on Iran were in tatters. Iran had gone from zero centrifuges spinning to thousands, without facing broad pushback from the world. In the region, Iran was ascendant—increasingly popular and extending its reach. In other words, the Iranian leadership was united and on the move, and the international community was divided about how to go forward.

**BO-AIPAC22**

And so from my very first months in office, we put forward a very clear choice to the Iranian regime: a path that would allow them to rejoin the community of nations if they meet their international obligations, or a path that leads to an escalating series of consequences if they don't. In fact, our policy of engagement—quickly rebuffed by the Iranian regime—allowed us to rally the international community as never before, to expose Iran's intransigence and to apply pressure that goes far beyond anything that the United States could do on our own.

**BO-AIPAC23**

Because of our efforts, Iran is under greater pressure than ever before. Some of you will recall, people predicted that Russia and China wouldn't join us to move toward pressure. They did. And in 2010 the UN Security Council overwhelmingly supported a comprehensive sanctions effort. Few thought that sanctions could have an immediate bite on the Iranian regime. They have, slowing the Iranian nuclear program and virtually grinding the Iranian economy to a halt in 2011. Many questioned whether we could hold our coalition together as we moved against Iran's Central Bank and oil exports. But our friends in Europe and Asia and elsewhere are joining us. And in 2012, the Iranian government faces the prospect of even more crippling sanctions.

**BO-AIPAC24**

That is where we are today, because of our work. Iran is isolated, its leadership divided and under pressure. And by the way, the Arab Spring has only increased these trends, as the hypocrisy of the Iranian regime is exposed, and its ally, the Assad regime, is crumbling.

**BO-AIPAC25**

Of course, so long as Iran fails to meet its obligations, this problem remains unresolved. The effective implementation of our policy is not enough—we must accomplish our objective. And in that effort, I firmly believe that an opportunity still remains for diplomacy—backed by pressure—to succeed.

**BO-AIPAC26**

The United States and Israel both assess that Iran does not yet have a nuclear weapon, and we are exceedingly vigilant in monitoring their program. Now, the international community has a responsibility to use the time and space that exists. Sanctions are continuing to increase, and this July—thanks to our diplomatic coordination—a European ban on Iranian oil imports will take hold. Faced with these increasingly dire consequences, Iran's leaders still have the opportunity to make the right decision. They can choose a path that brings them back into the community of nations, or they can continue down a dead end.

**BO-AIPAC27**

And given their history, there are, of course, no guarantees that the Iranian regime will make the right choice. But both Israel and the United States have an interest in seeing this challenge resolved diplomatically. After all, the only way to truly solve this problem is for the Iranian government to make a decision to forsake nuclear weapons. That's what history tells us.

**BO-AIPAC28**

Moreover, as president and commander in chief, I have a deeply held preference for peace over war. I have sent men and women into harm's way. I've seen the consequences of those decisions in the eyes of those I meet who've come back gravely wounded, and the absence of those who don't make it home. Long after I leave this office, I will remember those moments as the most searing of my presidency. And for this reason, as part of my solemn obligation to the American people, I will only use force when the time and circumstances demand it. And I know that Israeli leaders also know all too well the costs and consequences of war, even as they recognize their obligation to defend their country.

**BO-AIPAC29**

We all prefer to resolve this issue diplomatically. Having said that, Iran's leaders should have no doubt about the resolve of the United States—just as they should not doubt Israel's sovereign right to make its own decisions about what is required to meet its security needs.

**BO-AIPAC30**

I have said that when it comes to preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, I will take no options off the table, and I mean what I say. That includes all elements of American power: a political effort aimed at isolating Iran, a diplomatic effort to sustain our coalition and ensure that the Iranian program is monitored, an economic effort that imposes crippling sanctions and, yes, a military effort to be prepared for any contingency.

**BO-AIPAC31**

Iran's leaders should understand that I do not have a policy of containment; I have a policy to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. And as I have made clear time and again during the course of my presidency, I will not hesitate to use force when it is necessary to defend the United States and its interests. Moving forward, I would ask that we all remember the weightiness of these issues, the stakes involved for Israel, for America, and for the world. Already, there is too much loose talk of war. Over the last few weeks, such talk has only benefited the Iranian government, by driving up the price of oil, which they depend on to fund their nuclear program. For the sake of Israel's security, America's security and the peace and security of the world, now is not the time for bluster. Now is the time to let our increased pressure sink in and to sustain the broad international coalition we have built. Now is the time to heed the timeless advice from Teddy Roosevelt: speak softly; carry a big stick. And as we do, rest assured that the Iranian government will know our resolve and that our coordination with Israel will continue.

**BO-AIPAC32**

These are challenging times. But we've been through challenging times before, and the United States and Israel have come through them together. Because of our cooperation, citizens in both our countries have benefited from the bonds that bring us together. I'm proud to be one of those people. In the past, I've shared in this forum just why those bonds are so personal for me: the stories of a great uncle who helped liberate Buchenwald, to my memories of returning there with Elie Wiesel; from sharing books with President Peres to sharing seders with my young staff in a tradition that started on the campaign trail and continues in the White House; from the countless friends I know in this room to the concept of *tikkun olam* that has enriched and guided my life.

**BO-AIPAC33**

As Harry Truman understood, Israel's story is one of hope. We may not agree on every single issue—no two nations do, and our democracies contain a vibrant diversity of views. But we agree on the big things—the things that matter. And together, we are working to build a better world—one where our people can live free from fear; one where peace is founded upon justice; one where our children can know a future that is more hopeful than the present.

**BO-AIPAC34**

There is no shortage of speeches on the friendship between the United States and Israel. But I'm also mindful of the proverb, "A man is judged by his deeds, not his words." So if you want to know where my heart lies, look no further than what I have done—to stand up for Israel; to secure both of our countries and to see that the rough waters of our time lead to a peaceful and prosperous shore.



**BO-AIPAC35**

**Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the people of Israel. God bless the United States of America.**

**Appendix-IV: Speech by President Barak Obama on his Israeli trip to the Israeli Young People, Jerusalem International Convention Center (Jerusalem)**

*(March 21, 2013; Source: [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) )*

**BO-YIJ1**

Thank you. (Applause.) Shalom. (Applause.) Thank you so much. Well, it is a great honor to be with you here in Jerusalem, and I'm so grateful for the welcome that I've received from the people of Israel. Thank you. (Applause.) I bring with me the support of the American people- (Applause) - and the friendship that binds us together. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ2**

Over the last two days, I've reaffirmed the bonds between our countries with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Peres. I've borne witness to the ancient history of the Jewish people at the Shrine of the Book, and I've seen Israel's shining future in your scientists and your entrepreneurs. This is a nation of museums and patents, timeless holy sites and ground-breaking innovation. Only in Israel could you see the Dead Sea Scrolls and the place where the technology on board the Mars Rover originated at the same time. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ3**

But what I've most looked forward to is the ability to speak directly to you, the Israeli people-especially so many young people who are here today-(Applause)-to talk about the history that brought us here today, and the future that you will make in the years to come.

**BO-YIJ4**

Now, I know that in Israel's vibrant democracy, every word, every gesture is carefully scrutinized. (Laughter.) But I want to clear something up just so you know-any drama between me and my friend, Bibi, over the years was just a plot to create material for Eretz Nehederet. (Applause.) That's the only thing that was going on. We just wanted to make sure the writers had good material. (Laughter.)

**BO-YIJ5**

I also know that I come to Israel on the eve of a sacred holiday-the celebration of Passover. And that is where I would like to begin today.

**BO-YIJ6**

Just a few days from now, Jews here in Israel and around the world will sit with family and friends at the Seder table, and celebrate with songs, wine and symbolic foods. After enjoying Seders with family and friends in Chicago and on the campaign trail, I'm proud that I've now brought this tradition into the White House. (Applause.) I did so because I wanted my daughters to experience the Haggadah, and the story at the center of Passover that makes this time of year so powerful.

**BO-YIJ7**

It's a story of centuries of slavery, and years of wandering in the desert; a story of perseverance amidst persecution, and faith in God and the Torah. It's a story about finding freedom in your own land. And for the Jewish people, this story is central to who you've become. But it's also a story that holds within it the universal human experience, with all of its suffering, but also all of its salvation.

**BO-YIJ8**

It's a part of the three great religions-Judaism, Christianity, and Islam-that trace their origins to Abraham, and see Jerusalem as sacred. And it's a story that's inspired communities across the globe, including me and my fellow Americans.

**BO-YIJ9**

In the United States-a nation made up of people who crossed oceans to start anew-we're naturally drawn to the idea of finding freedom in our land. To African Americans, the story of the Exodus was perhaps the central story, the most powerful image about emerging from the grip of bondage to reach for liberty and human dignity-a tale that was carried from slavery through the Civil Rights Movement into today.

**BO-YIJ10**

For generations, this promise helped people weather poverty and persecution, while holding on to the hope that a better day was on the horizon. For me, personally, growing up in far-flung parts of the world and without firm roots, the story spoke to a yearning within every human being for a home. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ 11**

Of course, even as we draw strength from the story of God's will and His gift of freedom expressed on Passover, we also know that here on Earth we must bear our responsibilities in an imperfect world. That means accepting our measure of sacrifice and struggle, just like previous generations. It means us working through generation after generation on behalf of that ideal of freedom.

**BO-YIJ12**

As Dr. Martin Luther King said on the day before he was killed, "I may not get there with you. But I want you to know that we, as a people, will get to the promised land." (Applause.) So just as Joshua carried on after Moses, the work goes on for all of you, the Joshua Generation, for justice and dignity; for opportunity and freedom.

**BO-YIJ13**

For the Jewish people, the journey to the promise of the State of Israel wound through countless generations. It involved centuries of suffering and exile, prejudice and pogroms and even genocide. Through it all, the Jewish people sustained their unique identity and traditions, as well as a longing to return home. And while Jews achieved extraordinary success in many parts of the world, the dream of true freedom finally found its full expression in the Zionist idea-to be a free people in your homeland. That's why I believe that Israel is rooted not just in history and tradition, but also in a simple and profound idea-the idea that people deserve to be free in a land of their own. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ14**

Over the last 65 years, when Israel has been at its best, Israelis have demonstrated that responsibility does not end when you reach the promised land, it only begins. And so Israel has been a refuge for the diaspora-welcoming Jews from Europe, from the former Soviet Union, from Ethiopia, from North Africa. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ15**

Israel has built a prosperous nation-through kibbutzeem that made the desert bloom, business that broadened the middle class, and innovators who reached new frontiers, from the smallest microchip to the orbits of space. Israel has established a thriving democracy, with a spirited civil society and proud political parties, and a tireless free press, and a lively public debate-"lively" may even be an understatement. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ16**

And Israel has achieved all this even as it's overcome relentless threats to its security-through the courage of the Israel Defense Forces, and the citizenry that is so resilient in the face of terror.

**BO-YIJ17**

This is the story of Israel. This is the work that has brought the dreams of so many generations to life. And every step of the way, Israel has built unbreakable bonds of friendship with my country, the United States of America. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ18**

Those ties began only 11 minutes after Israeli independence, when the United States was the first nation to recognize the State of Israel. (Applause.) As President Truman said in explaining his decision to recognize Israel, he said, "I believe it has a glorious future before it not just as another sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals of our civilization." And since then, we've built a friendship that advances our shared interests.

**BO-YIJ19**

Together, we share a commitment to security for our citizens and the stability of the Middle East and North Africa. Together, we share a focus on advancing economic growth around the globe, and strengthening the middle class within our own countries. Together, we share a stake in the success of democracy.

**BO-YIJ 20**

But the source of our friendship extends beyond mere interests, just as it has transcended political parties and individual leaders. America is a nation of immigrants. America is strengthened by diversity. America is enriched by faith. We are governed not simply by men and women, but by laws. We're fueled by entrepreneurship and innovation, and we are defined by a democratic discourse that allows each generation to re-imagine and renew our union once more. So in Israel, we see values that we share, even as we recognize what makes us different. That is an essential part of our bond.

**BO-YIJ21**

Now, I stand here today mindful that for both our nations, these are some complicated times. We have difficult issues to work through within our own countries, and we face dangers and upheaval around the world. And when I look at young people within the United States, I think about the choices that they must make in their lives to define who we'll be as a nation in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, particularly as we emerge from two wars and the worst recession since the Great Depression. But part of the reason I like talking to young people is because no matter how great the challenges are, their idealism, their energy, their ambition always gives me hope. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ22**

And I see the same spirit in the young people here today. (Applause.) I believe that you will shape our future. And given the ties between our countries, I believe your future is bound to ours. (Audience interruption.)

**BO-YIJ23**

No, no-this is part of the lively debate that we talked about. (Applause.) This is good. You know, I have to say we actually arranged for that, because it made me feel at home. (Laughter.) I wouldn't feel comfortable if I didn't have at least one heckler\*. (Laughter.)

**BO-YIJ24**

I'd like to focus on how we-and when I say "we," in particular young people-can work together to make progress in three areas that will define our times-security, peace and prosperity. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ25**

Let me begin with security. I'm proud that the security relationship between the United States and Israel has never been stronger. Never. (Applause.) More exercises between our militaries; more exchanges among our political and military and intelligence officials than ever before; the largest program to date to help you retain your qualitative military edge. These are the facts. These aren't my opinions, these are facts. But, to me, this is not simply measured on a balance sheet. I know that here, in Israel, security is something personal.

**BO-YIJ26**

Here's what I think about when I consider these issues. When I consider Israel's security, I think about children like Osher Twito, who I met in Sderot-(applause)-children the same age as my own daughters who went to bed at night fearful that a rocket would land in their bedroom simply because of who they are and where they live. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ27**

That reality is why we've invested in the Iron Dome system to save countless lives-because those children deserve to sleep better at night. (Applause.) That's why we've made it clear, time and again, that Israel cannot accept rocket attacks from Gaza, and we have stood up for Israel's right to defend itself. (Applause.) And that's why Israel has a right to expect Hamas to renounce violence and recognize Israel's right to exist. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ28**

When I think about Israel's security, I think about five Israelis who boarded a bus in Bulgaria, who were blown up because of where they came from; robbed of the ability to live, and love, and raise families. That's why every country that values justice should call Hizbollah what it truly is-a terrorist organization. (Applause.) Because the world cannot tolerate an organization that murders innocent civilians, stockpiles rockets to shoot at cities, and supports the massacre of men and women and children in Syria right now. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ29**

The fact that Hizbollah's ally-the Assad regime-has stockpiles of chemical weapons only heightens the urgency. We will continue to cooperate closely to guard against that danger. I've made it clear to Bashar al-Assad and all who follow his orders: We will not tolerate the use of chemical weapons against the Syrian people, or the transfer of those weapons to terrorists. The world is watching; we will hold you accountable. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ30**

The Syrian people have the right to be freed from the grip of a dictator who would rather kill his own people than relinquish power. (Applause.) Assad must go so that Syria's future can begin. This is because; true stability in Syria depends upon establishing a government that is responsible to its people--one that protects all communities within its borders, while making peace with countries beyond them.

**BO-YIJ31**

These are the things I think about when I think about Israel's security. When I consider Israel's security, I also think about a people who have a living memory of the Holocaust, faced with the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iranian government that has called for Israel's destruction. It's no wonder Israelis view this as an existential threat. But this is not simply a challenge for Israel-it is a danger for the entire world, including the United States. (Applause.) A nuclear-armed Iran would raise the risk of nuclear terrorism. It would undermine the non-proliferation regime. It would spark an arms race in a volatile region. And it would embolden a government that has shown no respect for the rights of its own people or the responsibilities of nations. That's why America has built a coalition to increase the cost to Iran of failing to meet their obligations. The Iranian government is now under more pressure than ever before, and that pressure is increasing. It is isolated. Its economy is in dire straits. Its leadership is divided. And its position-in the region, and the world-has only grown weaker. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ32**

I do believe that all of us have an interest in resolving this issue peacefully. (Applause.) Strong and principled diplomacy is the best way to ensure that the Iranian government forsakes nuclear weapons. (Applause.) Peace is far more preferable to war. And the inevitable costs, the unintended consequences that would come with war means that we have to do everything we can to try to resolve this diplomatically. Because of the cooperation between our governments, we know that there remains time to pursue a diplomatic resolution. That's what America will do, with clear eyes-working with a world that's united, and with the sense of urgency that's required.

**BO-YIJ33**

But Iran must know this time is not unlimited. And I've made the position of the United States of America clear: Iran must not get a nuclear weapon. This is not a danger that can be contained, and as President, I've said all options are on the table for achieving our objectives. America will do what we must to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ34**

For young Israelis, I know that these issues of security are rooted in an experience that is even more fundamental than the pressing threat of the day. You live in a neighborhood where many of your neighbors have rejected the right of your nation to exist. Your grandparents had to risk their lives and all that they had to make a place for themselves in this world. Your parents lived through war after war to ensure the survival of the Jewish state. Your children grow up knowing that people they've never met may hate them because of who they are, in a region that is full of turmoil and changing underneath your feet.

**BO-YIJ35**

So that's what I think about when Israel is faced with these challenges-that sense of an Israel that is surrounded by many in this region who still reject it, and many in the world who refuse to accept it. And that's why the security of the Jewish people in Israel is so important. It cannot be taken for granted.

**BO-YIJ36**

But make no mistake-those who adhere to the ideology of rejecting Israel's right to exist, they might as well reject the earth beneath them or the sky above, because Israel is not going anywhere. (Applause.) And today, I want to tell you-particularly the young people-so that there's no mistake here, so long as there is a United States of America-Atem lo levad. You are not alone. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ37**

The question is what kind of future Israel will look forward to. Israel is not going anywhere-but especially for the young people in this audience, the question is what does its future hold? And that brings me to the subject of peace. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ38**

I know Israel has taken risks for peace. Brave leaders-Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Rabin-reached treaties with two of your neighbors. You made credible proposals to the Palestinians at Annapolis. You withdrew from Gaza and Lebanon, and then faced terror and rockets. Across the region, you've extended a hand of friendship and all too often you've been confronted with rejection and, in some cases, the ugly reality of anti-Semitism. So I believe that the Israeli people do want peace, and I also understand why too many Israelis-maybe an increasing number, maybe a lot of young people here today-are skeptical that it can be achieved.

**BO-YIJ39**

But today, Israel is at a crossroads. It can be tempting to put aside the frustrations and sacrifices that come with the pursuit of peace, particularly when Iron Dome repels rockets, barriers keep out suicide bombers. There's so many other pressing issues that demand your attention. And I know that only Israelis can make the fundamental decisions about your country's future. (Applause.) I recognize that.

**BO-YIJ40**

I also know, by the way, that not everyone in this hall will agree with what I have to say about peace. I recognize that there are those who are not simply skeptical about peace, but question its underlying premise, have a different vision for Israel's future. And that's part of a democracy. That's part of the discourse between our two countries. I recognize that. But I also believe it's important to be open and honest, especially with your friends. I also believe that. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ41**

Politically, given the strong bipartisan support for Israel in America, the easiest thing for me to do would be to put this issue aside-just express unconditional support for whatever Israel decides to do-that would be the easiest political path. But I want you to know that I speak to you as a friend who is deeply concerned and committed to your future, and I ask you to consider three points.

**BO-YIJ42**

First, peace is necessary. (Applause.) I believe that. I believe that peace is the only path to true security. (Applause.) You have the opportunity to be the generation that permanently secures the Zionist dream, or you can face a growing challenge to its future. Given the demographics west of the Jordan River, the only way for Israel to endure and thrive as a Jewish and democratic state is through the realization of an independent and viable Palestine. (Applause.) That is true. There are other factors involved. Given the frustration in the international community about this conflict, Israel needs to reverse an undertow of isolation. And given the march of technology, the only way to truly protect the Israeli people over the long term is through the absence of war. Because no wall is high enough and no Iron Dome is strong enough or perfect enough to stop every enemy that is intent on doing so from inflicting harm. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ43**

And this truth is more pronounced given the changes sweeping the Arab world. I understand that with the uncertainty in the region-people in the streets, changes in leadership, the rise of non-secular parties in politics-it's tempting to turn inward, because the situation outside of Israel seems so chaotic. But this is precisely the time to respond to the wave of revolution with a resolve and commitment for peace. (Applause.) Because, as more governments respond to popular will, the days when Israel could seek peace simply with a handful of autocratic leaders, those days are over. Peace will have to be made among peoples, not just governments. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ44**

No one-no single step can change overnight what lies in the hearts and minds of millions. No single step is going to erase years of history and propaganda. But progress with the Palestinians is a powerful way to begin, while sidelining extremists who thrive on conflict and thrive on division. It would make a difference. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ45**

So peace is necessary. But peace is also just. Peace is also just. There is no question that Israel has faced Palestinian factions who turned to terror, leaders who missed historic opportunities. That is all true. And that's why security must be at the center of any agreement. And there is no question that the only path to peace is through negotiations — which is why, despite the criticism we've received, the United States will oppose unilateral efforts to bypass negotiations through the United Nations. It has to be done by the parties. (Applause.) But the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, their right to justice, must also be recognized. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ46**

Put yourself in their shoes. Look at the world through their eyes. It is not fair that a Palestinian child cannot grow up in a state of their own. (Applause.) Living their entire lives with the presence of a foreign army that controls the movements not just of those young people but their parents, their grandparents, every single day. It's not just when settler violence against Palestinians goes unpunished. (Applause.) It's not right to prevent Palestinians from farming their lands; or restricting a student's ability to move around the West Bank; or displace Palestinian families from their homes. (Applause.) Neither occupation nor expulsion is the answer. (Applause.) Just as Israelis built a state in their homeland, Palestinians have a right to be a free people in their own land. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ47**

I'm going off script here for a second, but before I came here, I met with a group of young Palestinians from the age of 15 to 22. And talking to them, they weren't that different from my daughters. They weren't that different from your daughters or sons. I honestly believe that if any Israeli parent sat down with those kids, they'd say, I want these kids to succeed; I want them to prosper. (Applause.) I want them to have opportunities just like my kids do. I believe that's what Israeli parents would want for these kids if they had a chance to listen to them and talk to them. (Applause.) I believe that.

**BO-YIJ48**

Now, only you can determine what kind of democracy you will have. But remember that as you make these decisions, you will define not simply the future of your relationship with the Palestinians-you will define the future of Israel as well. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ49**

As Ariel Sharon said-I'm quoting him-"It is impossible to have a Jewish democratic state, at the same time to control all of Eretz Israel. If we insist on fulfilling the dream in its entirety, we are liable to lose it all." (Applause.) Or, from a different perspective, I think of what the novelist David Grossman said shortly after losing his son, as he described the necessity of peace-"A peace of no choice" he said, "must be approached with the same determination and creativity as one approaches a war of no choice." (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ50**

Now, Israel cannot be expected to negotiate with anyone who is dedicated to its destruction. (Applause.) But while I know you have had differences with the Palestinian Authority, I

genuinely believe that you do have a true partner in President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad. (Applause.) I believe that. And they have a track record to prove it. Over the last few years, they have built institutions and maintained security on the West Bank in ways that few could have imagined just a few years ago. So many Palestinians-including young people-have rejected violence as a means of achieving their aspirations.

**BO-YIJ51**

There is an opportunity there, there's a window-which brings me to my third point: Peace is possible. It is possible. (Applause.) I'm not saying it's guaranteed. I can't even say that it is more likely than not. But it is possible. I know it doesn't seem that way. There are always going to be reasons to avoid risk. There are costs for failure. There will always be extremists who provide an excuse not to act.

**BO-YIJ52**

I know there must be something exhausting about endless talks about talks, and daily controversies, and just the grinding status quo. And I'm sure there's a temptation just to say, "Ah, enough. Let me focus on my small corner of the world and my family and my job and what I can control." But it's possible.

**BO-YIJ53**

Negotiations will be necessary, but there's little secret about where they must lead-two states for two peoples. Two states for two peoples. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ54**

There will be differences about how to get there. There are going to be hard choices along the way. Arab states must adapt to a world that has changed. The days when they could condemn Israel to distract their people from a lack of opportunity, or government corruption or mismanagement-those days need to be over. (Applause.) Now is the time for the Arab world to take steps toward normalizing relations with Israel. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ55**

Meanwhile, Palestinians must recognize that Israel will be a Jewish state and that Israelis have the right to insist upon their security. (Applause.) Israelis must recognize that continued settlement activity is counterproductive to the cause of peace, and that an independent Palestine must be viable with real borders that have to be drawn. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ56**

I've suggested principles on territory and security that I believe can be the basis for these talks. But for the moment, put aside the plans and the process. I ask you, instead, to think about what can be done to build trust between people.

**BO-YIJ57**

Four years ago, I stood in Cairo in front of an audience of young people-politically, religiously, they must seem a world away. But the things they want, they're not so different from what the young people here want. They want the ability to make their own decisions and to get an education, get a good job; to worship God in their own way; to get married; to raise a family. The same is true of those young Palestinians that I met with this morning. The same is true for young Palestinians who yearn for a better life in Gaza.

**BO-YIJ58**

That's where peace begins-not just in the plans of leaders, but in the hearts of people. Not just in some carefully designed process, but in the daily connections-that sense of empathy that takes place among those who live together in this land and in this sacred city of Jerusalem. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ59**

And let me say this as a politician-I can promise you this, political leaders will never take risks if the people do not push them to take some risks. (Applause.) You must create the change that you want to see. (Applause.) Ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary things. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ60**

I know this is possible. Look to the bridges being built in business and civil society by some of you here today. Look at the young people who've not yet learned a reason to mistrust, or those young people who've learned to overcome a legacy of mistrust that they inherited from their parents, because they

simply recognize that we hold more hopes in common than fears that drive us apart. Your voices must be louder than those who would drown out hope. Your hopes must light the way forward. Look to a future in which Jews and Muslims and Christians can all live in peace and greater prosperity in this Holy Land. (Applause.) Believe in that. And most of all, look to the future that you want for your own children-a future in which a Jewish, democratic, vibrant state is protected and accepted for this time and for all time. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ61**

There will be many who say this change is not possible, but remember this-Israel is the most powerful country in this region. Israel has the unshakeable support of the most powerful country in the world. (Applause.) Israel is not going anywhere. Israel has the wisdom to see the world as it is, but-this is in your nature-Israel also has the courage to see the world as it should be. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ62**

Ben Gurion once said, "In Israel, in order to be a realist you must believe in miracles." (Laugh.) Sometimes, the greatest miracle is recognizing that the world can change. That's a lesson that the world has learned from the Jewish people.

**BO-YIJ63**

And that brings me to the final area that I'll focus on: prosperity, and Israel's broader role in the world. I know that all the talk about security and peace can sometimes seem to dominate the headlines, but that's not where people live. And every day, even amidst the threats that you face, Israelis are defining themselves by the opportunities that you're creating.

**BO-YIJ64**

Through talent and hard work, Israelis have put this small country at the forefront of the global economy.

**BO-YIJ65**

Israelis understand the value of education and have produced 10 Nobel laureates. (Applause.) Israelis understand the power of invention, and your universities educate engineers and inventors. And that spirit has led to economic growth and human progress-solar power and electric cars, bandages and prosthetic limbs that save lives, stem cell research and new drugs that treat disease, cell phones and computer technology that changed the way people around the world live. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ66**

So if people want to see the future of the world economy, they should look at Tel Aviv, home to hundreds of start-ups and research centers. (Applause.) Israelis are so active on social media that every day seemed to bring a different Facebook campaign about where I should give this speech. (Laughter and applause.)

**BO-YIJ 67**

That innovation is just as important to the relationship between the United States and Israel as our security cooperation. Our first free trade agreement in the world was reached with Israel, nearly three decades ago. (Applause.) Today the trade between our two countries is at \$40 billion every year. (Applause.) More importantly, that partnership is creating new products and medical treatments; it's pushing new frontiers of science and exploration.

**BO-YIJ68**

That's the kind of relationship that Israel should have-and could have-with every country in the world. Already, we see how that innovation could reshape this region. There's a program here in Jerusalem that brings together young Israelis and Palestinians to learn vital skills in technology and business. An Israeli and Palestinian have started a venture capital fund to finance Palestinian start-ups. Over 100 high-tech companies have found a home on the West Bank-which speaks to the talent and entrepreneurial spirit of the Palestinian people.

**BO-YIJ69**

One of the great ironies of what's happening in the broader region is that so much of what people are yearning for-education, entrepreneurship, the ability to start a business without paying a bribe, the ability to connect to the global economy-those are things that can be found here in Israel. This should be a hub for thriving regional trade, and an engine for opportunity. (Applause.)



**BO-YIJ70**

Israel is already a center for innovation that helps power the global economy. And I believe that all of that potential for prosperity can be enhanced with greater security, enhanced with lasting peace. (Applause.)

**BO-YIJ71**

Here, in this small strip of land that has been the center of so much of the world's history, so much triumph and so much tragedy, Israelis have built something that few could have imagined 65 years ago. Tomorrow, I will pay tribute to that history-at the grave of Herzl, a man who had the foresight to see the future of the Jewish people had to be reconnected to their past; at the grave of Rabin, who understood that Israel's victories in war had to be followed by the battles for peace; at Yad Vashem, where the world is reminded of the cloud of evil that can descend on the Jewish people and all of humanity if we ever fail to be vigilant.

**BO-YIJ72**

We bear all that history on our shoulders. We carry all that history in our hearts. Today, as we face the twilight of Israel's founding generation, you-the young people of Israel-must now claim its future. It falls to you to write the next chapter in the great story of this great nation .And as the President of a country that you can count on as your greatest friend-(Applause)-I am confident that you can help us find the promise in the days that lie ahead. And as a man who's been inspired in my own life by that timeless calling within the Jewish experience-tikkun olam-(Applause)-I am hopeful that we can draw upon what's best in ourselves to meet the challenges that will come; to win the battles for peace in the wake of so much war; and to do the work of repairing this world. (Applause.) That's your job. That's my job. That's the task of all of us.

**BO-YIJ73**

**May God bless you. May God bless Israel. May God bless the United States of America. Toda raba. Thank you. (Applause.)**

*\* The heckler who was immediately escorted out was later identified. His name is Rabiya Aid. He is a 24 year old Arab-Israeli student from Haifa.*