# Expect Trump to win elections and Biden to bash Israel

written by David M. Weinberg | 04.11.2024

Israel must be prepared to weather the November to January interim chapter between US presidents, following what I expect will be a decisive win by Donald Trump in next week's American elections.

In the past, such transition periods have proven perilous in US policy and US-Israel relations.

The classic example of this is president Barack Obama's decision in December 2016, as he was about to depart the White House after eight years of bullying Prime Minister Netanyahu, to lambaste Israel one last time by allowing passage of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution 2334.

That resolution, which the Obama White House deviously helped craft and on which the US then abstained, allowing its passage, declared that settlements constitute a flagrant violation of international law.

What is less known is that Obama planned a second and even worse UNSC resolution at that time, which was scuttled only by the willingness of Russian President Putin to veto the effort.

According to reports, Netanyahu appealed personally to Putin on this, and president-elect Trump's team played a role in this, too.

As revealed years later in 2020 by Israel Hayom and by reporters and editors of this newspaper (specifically Lahav Harkov and David Jablinowitz), that second resolution would have imposed international "parameters" and mandated an "irreversible" timeline for an Israeli-Palestinian final status arrangement, meaning establishment of full-fledged, runaway Palestinian statehood.

Although the nascent resolution was not laid on the UNSC table, outgoing secretary of state John Kerry gave a long, wild tirade of a speech against Netanyahu, laying out the "must be" parameters for a two-state solution, and demanding that the world continue to pressure Israel until it bends.

A similar UNSC resolution foisting "irreversible" parameters for Palestinian statehood on Israel – with, say, a two-year deadline – may be exactly what the Biden-Harris administration is planning in the coming three months.

This, despite the clearly exposed annihilationist (toward Israel) character of the Palestinian national movement; despite the October 7 Hamas invasion of Israel and Fatah (Palestinian Authority/PA) support for that attack; despite Mahmoud Abbas's pay-for-slay program; despite the near-takeover by Hamas militias of a major part of Samaria, etc.

ADDITIONAL PUNITIVE steps against Israel that the outgoing Biden administration is likely to take include recognition of future Palestinian sovereignty in eastern Jerusalem – to offset, or "atone" for, the Trump administration's move of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

I also expect a declaration that the PA is the rightful sovereign in Gaza, and a renunciation of the 2019 "Pompeo Declaration" which recognized Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria as "not per se inconsistent with international law."

In fact, Washington is planning additional sanctions against Israeli civil society organizations that are right-wing and pro-settlement, ranging from Amana to Regavim (as Canada and Australia and others already have done).

And Biden may also be hutzpadik enough, cocksure and brazen, to hit elected Israeli public figures, like ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, with personal sanctions.

The Biden-Harris administration might also hint to the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor that it would now welcome war crime indictments against Israeli leaders.

Worst of all, is the threat of an embargo on further US arms supply to Israel. This is imminent.

On October 13, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin gave Israel a 30-day warning to let more humanitarian aid into Gaza, or else face unspecified "implications."

Their formal letter of warning referenced NSM-20, which is a US National

Security Council memorandum that allows for “appropriate next steps” if a country receiving US military aid is deemed not to be meeting prior assurances of allowing the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

“Such remediation could include actions from refreshing the assurances to suspending any further transfers of defense articles or, as appropriate, defense services,” the memorandum states.

Other legislation that could be invoked against Israel include section 620I of the Foreign Assistance Act and the Leahy Act, which preclude the US government from providing military assistance or selling arms to countries that restrict humanitarian aid or violate human rights.

IN THE run-up to next week’s presidential election, the Biden-Harris administration has shied away from such moves, and only slow-walked delivery of some key military spare parts and types of sophisticated munitions.

But you can feel how, in its dying days, the Biden-Harris administration is chomping at the bit to act on its most “progressive” impulses: To clobber insolent Israel and to reset US Mideast policy away from Israel.

This conceivably could include a last-minute, rash giveaway proposal to Iran for yet another soft and dangerous nuclear deal.

## After November 5, beware!

Many of these hostile moves can be walked back by presidential decree or fixed by wise secretaries of state and defense in a friendlier, more strategically sane, next US administration.

But repairing the long-term damage of an UNSC resolution with imperative parameters and intimidating deadlines will be much harder.

And the very precedent of an openly declared disruption in US arms supply of Israel would be terribly damaging, too, even if it is later overturned and generously over-compensated by massively boosted arms transfers.

Trump may be able to ward-off some of the worst instincts and plans of the wounded Biden-Harris team by making it clear already on November 6 that he will not tolerate such shenanigans.

He can and should declare that when he takes office on January 20, he will act swiftly to overturn any radical departures in US policy towards Israel (or towards Iran) and that he will repair the closest US-Israeli coordination.

SOME OF the nastiest Biden-Harris moves may require remedial congressional action. Republican leaders in Congress will have to be expeditious and resolute in upending extreme Democratic moves against Israel.

They can quickly counteract moves by the ICC against Israel with tough American retaliation against the court officials.

And here is something more that would be HUGE! President-elect-to-be Trump could usefully help bring Israel's current wars to an end with the crushing victories that they must be (!), by clearly saying just that Israel must overwhelmingly crush its enemies.

This would be a sea change from the deleterious, equivocal, weak, and mealy-mouthed constant plaint of the Biden-Harris administration that the war/s "must end," "must end now," and "must end immediately," and that we "need a ceasefire right away." Oh, and that while Israel "has a right" to defend itself, it "must uphold" international law (which apparently applies only to Israel and in warped fashion) while fighting its enemies.

This is especially important as Israel moves in the coming months, I expect, to more decisively than ever degrade Iran's hegemonic military arrays.

Trump does not want America to be dragged into full-scale war in the Middle East any more than Biden does, but Trump can be expected to better provide Israel with the diplomatic and material defenses it will need.

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