

January 20, 2017

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The Honorable Barack Obama
The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

On behalf of AJC, which has had the honor of working with your Administration for eight eventful years, we write to express our gratitude for your service to this great Nation and to wish you every success in the years to come.

As nonpartisan advocates of American pluralistic and democratic values, and of the security and well-being of the Jewish people, we look back on your Administration with admiration for its inclusiveness, its consistent outreach to our community and other minority communities, its leadership in combating anti-Semitism and other bigotries, and its determination to reassert principled American leadership in a fractured, troubled world. Domestically, in an era of racial tension, you sought to heal – and at the precipice of depression, you oversaw recovery. Internationally, you sought to reverse a decline in perceptions of America by emphasizing “soft power” and “smart power” over military intervention, and diplomacy over unilateralism.

While we were disappointed, as you well know, over the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and your decision last month to permit an unbalanced resolution on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to be adopted by the UN Security Council, we remain grateful for your strong and steady support for Israel’s security and for an enhanced U.S.-Israel alliance throughout your Presidency. With sincere appreciation, we recall – among other achievements – your decision to boycott the April 2009 UN Durban Review Conference (as AJC, invited to consult the White House at the time, had urged), your Administration’s successful push to convene unprecedented UN discussions on anti-Semitism, the intensification of intelligence and defense cooperation with Israel on your watch, the \$38 billion military aid Memorandum of Understanding signed last fall, and numerous instances of U.S. resistance to UN and other international efforts to single out, delegitimize, and impose political pressure on Israel.

For this substantial record of accomplishment, and for the grace and thoughtfulness with which you have borne the burdens of office, we and our Nation remain in your debt.

With our best wishes to you and your family,

Respectfully,

John Shapiro

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