

ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE ROLE AS BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM HEATS UP

By Patrick Goodenough (CNSNews.com)

May 22/09. As Israelis marked “Jerusalem Day” Thursday, local media reported that the Palestinian Authority was considering favorably a proposal for control of the Temple Mount – the most bitterly contested piece of land in the Mideast conflict – to be handed to the (OIC) as part of a future peace deal.

The *Ha’aretz* daily cited Palestinian sources as saying the P.A. would accept a proposal that would divide sovereignty of Jerusalem’s Old City between Israel and the government of a future Palestinian state, with the OIC managing the Temple Mount.

In recent speeches and interviews, Jordan’s King Abdullah has fed speculation about a move to bring the OIC states into the equation, with talk about a “57-state solution.” The Saudi-based OIC has 57 members.

OIC foreign ministers meet in Damascus on Saturday with a full agenda, including “developments in the Holy City of al-Quds [Jerusalem],” according to an OIC statement. Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh last week urged the OIC to “rescue Jerusalem and its Islamic holy sites.”

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OBAMA’S PLANS AND WHAT NETANYAHU’S SHOULD DO

By Caroline Glick – www.jpost.com

May 21/09. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's visit with US President Barack Obama at the White House on Monday was a baptism of fire for the new premier. What emerged from the meeting is that Obama's priorities regarding Iran, Israel and the Arab world are diametrically opposed to Israel's priorities.

During his ad hoc press conference with Netanyahu, Obama made clear that he will not lift a finger to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. And acting as Obama's surrogate, for the past two weeks CIA Director Leon Panetta has made clear that Obama expects Israel to also sit on its thumbs as Iran develops the means to destroy it.

On the face of it, Obama's obsessive push for a Palestinian state makes little sense. The Palestinians are hopelessly divided. It is not simply that Hamas rules the Gaza Strip and Fatah controls Judea and Samaria. Fatah itself is riven by division.

Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas's appointment of the new PA government under Salaam Fayad was overwhelmingly rejected by Fatah leaders. Quite simply, there is no coherent Palestinian leadership that is either willing or capable of reaching an accord with Israel.

Obama's intention to unveil his Middle East peace plan in the course of his speech to the Muslim world in Cairo on June 4, like his decision to opt out of visiting Israel in favor of visiting a Nazi death camp, make it clear that he does not perceive Israel as a vital ally, or even as a partner in the peace process he wishes to initiate. Israeli officials were not consulted about

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his plan. Then, too, from the emerging contours of his plan, it is clear that he will be offering something that no Israeli government can accept.

According to media reports, Obama's plan will require Israel to withdraw its citizens and its military to the indefensible 1949 armistice lines. It will provide for the free immigration of millions of Israel-hating Arabs to the Palestinian state. And it seeks to represent all of this as in accord with Israel's interests by claiming that after Israel renders itself indefensible, all 57 members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (including Iran) will "normalize" their relations with Israel. In short, Obama is using his peace plan to castigate the Netanyahu government as the chief destabilizing force in the region.

During his meeting with Obama, Netanyahu succeeded in evading the policy traps Obama set for him. Netanyahu reserved Israel's right to act independently against Iran and he conceded nothing substantive on the Palestinian issue.

SO WHAT MUST NETANYAHU DO?

What would a strategy to contain the Obama administration's pressure and maintain international attention on Iran look like?

Under the present circumstances, the Netanyahu government's best bet is to introduce its own peace plan to mitigate the impact of Obama's plan. To blunt the impact of Obama's speech in Cairo, Netanyahu should present his *own* peace plan.

Such a plan should contain three stages. First, in light of the Arab world's apparent willingness to engage with Israel, Netanyahu should call for the opening of direct talks between Israel and the Arab League, or between Israel and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, regarding the immediate normalization of relations between Israel and the Arab-Islamic world. Both Obama and Jordan's King Abdullah claim that such normalization is in the offing. Israel should insist that it begin without delay.

The second stage of the Israeli peace plan would involve Israel and the Arab world agreeing and beginning to implement a joint program for combating terrorism.

It should be abundantly clear to all governments in the region that there can be no long-term regional peace or stability as long as terrorists bent on destroying Israel and overthrowing moderate Arab regimes are allowed to operate.

The final stage of the Israeli peace plan should be the negotiation of a final-status accord with the Palestinians. Only after the Arab world has accepted Israel, and only after it has agreed to join Israel in achieving the common goal of a terror-free Middle East, can there be any chance that the Palestinians will feel comfortable and free to peacefully coexist with Israel.

Whether Netanyahu advances such a peace plan or not, what became obvious this week is that his greatest challenges in office will be to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons while preventing the Obama administration from blaming Israel for the absence of peace.

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ISRAEL AND THE AXIS OF EVIL

THE NORTH KOREAN AND IRANI NUCLEAR PROGRAMS

- By Caroline B. Glick

May 28/09. North Korea is half a world away from Israel. Yet the nuclear test it conducted on Monday has the Israeli defense establishment up in arms and its Iranian nemesis smiling like the Cheshire Cat. Understanding why this is the case is key to understanding the danger posed by what someone once impolitely referred to as the Axis of Evil.

Less than two years ago, on September 6, 2007, the IAF destroyed a North Korean-built plutonium production facility at Kibar, Syria. The destroyed installation was a virtual clone of North Korea's Yongbyon plutonium production facility.

This past March the Swiss daily **Neue Zuercher Zeitung** reported that Iranian defector Ali Reza Asghari, who before his March 2007 defection to the US served as a general in Iran's Revolutionary Guards and as deputy defense minister, divulged that Iran paid for the North Korean facility. Teheran viewed the installation in Syria as an extension of its own nuclear program. According to Israeli estimates, Teheran spent between a billion and two billion dollars for the project.

It can be assumed that Iranian personnel were present in North Korea during Monday's test. Over the past several years, Iranian nuclear officials have been on hand for all of North Korea's major tests including its first nuclear test and its intercontinental ballistic missile test in 2006.

Moreover, it wouldn't be far-fetched to think that North Korea conducted some level of coordination with Iran regarding the timing of its nuclear bomb and ballistic missile tests this week. It is hard to imagine that it is mere coincidence that North Korea's actions came just a week after Iran tested its solid fuel Sejil-2 missile with a range of two thousand kilometers.

Aside from their chronological proximity, the main reason it makes sense to assume that Iran and North Korea coordinated their separate tests is because North Korea has played a central role in Iran's missile program. Although Western observers claim that Iran's Sejil-2 is based on Chinese technology transferred to Iran through Pakistan, the fact is that Iran owes much of its ballistic missile capacity to North Korea. The Shihab-3 missile for instance, which forms the backbone of Iran's strategic arm threatening to Israel and its Arab neighbors is simply an Iranian adaptation of North Korea's Nodong missile technology. Since at least the early 1990s, North Korea has been only too happy to proliferate that technology to whoever wants it. Like Iran, Syria owes much of its own massive missile arsenal to North Korean proliferation.

Beyond Obama's timeline, over the past week, two other developments made it apparent that regardless of what Iran does, the Obama administration will not revise its policy of placing its Middle East emphasis on weakening Israel rather than on stopping Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. First, last Friday **Yediot Ahronot** reported that at a recent lecture in Washington, US Lt. General Keith Dayton, who is responsible for training Palestinian military forces in Jordan stated outright that if Israel does not surrender Judea and Samaria within two years, the Palestinian forces he and his fellow American officers are now training at a cost of more than \$300 million will begin killing Israelis.

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