



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 31, 2012

Romney Hosts Unprecedented \$1M Fundraiser in Israel

The GOP's presumptive presidential nominee Mitt Romney surprised the mainstream media and the American people by [hosting](#) an unprecedented fundraiser in Israel July 30, which was attended by 20 to 30 people and raised over \$1 million for his campaign. The event is just another example of Romney's sworn allegiance to the nation of Israel.



Romney's trip to Israel was part of a seven-day overseas trip that started in England and will conclude in Poland. The Israeli fundraiser, held at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, was attended by a number of top Jewish donors, including New York Jets owner Woody Johnson and hedge fund manager Paul Singer, as well as casino mogul Sheldon Adelson, who owns a Jewish newspaper and pledged tens of millions of dollars to Romney's Super PACs.

As noted by Fox News, overseas fundraisers have become "somewhat of a new phenomenon" over the course of the last decade, as President George W. Bush, as well as Senators John McCain and John Kerry, all traveled abroad for fundraising, mostly in London.

What is unprecedented about Romney's overseas fundraiser is its location. Fox News reports:

It's Israel specifically that makes this occasion unique. London is an easy commute for Europeans, but Israel becomes more intense for anyone traveling — given the security and trouble to come here, along with the risky nature of looking like the candidate's raising money off Israeli politics.

Analysts believe Romney's trip to Israel was done in hope that he may win over some of Obama's Jewish support. A recent Gallup survey of Jewish voters shows that Obama leads over Romney, 68 to 25 percent overall.

Romney has attempted to argue that President Obama is not supportive of Israel, and will not stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Romney claims that those who stay committed to keeping nuclear weapons out of the hands of the Iranian regime are the "true peacemakers."

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed the former Massachusetts governor's trip to Israel, calling him a "representative of the United States." Responding to Romney's recent statements that a nuclear Iran poses the greatest danger, Netanyahu asserted, "Mitt, I couldn't agree with you more," adding,

We have to be honest and say that all the sanctions and diplomacy so far have not set back the Iranian program by one iota. And that's why I believe that we need a strong and credible military threat coupled with the sanctions to have a chance to change that situation.



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Romney's [speech](#) to top donors at the event in Israel drew criticism from Palestinian leaders, who were angered by his assertions that the "hand of providence" was responsible for the "stark difference in economic vitality" between Israel and Palestine. Romney declared,

As you come here and you see the GDP per capita, for instance, in Israel, which is about \$21,000 dollars, and compare that with the GDP per capita just across the areas managed by the Palestinian Authority, which is more like \$10,000 per capita, you notice such a dramatically stark difference in economic vitality.

He attributed the economic success to Israeli perseverance and business sense: And as I come here and I look out over this city and consider the accomplishments of the people of this nation, I recognize the power of at least culture and a few other things.

Palestinian spokesman Saeb Erekat [responded](#) angrily:

What is this man doing here? Yesterday, he destroyed negotiations by saying Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, and today he is saying Israeli culture is more advanced than Palestinian culture. Isn't this racism? Israelis and Palestinians have a conflict, but they are people, they are equal; it is not a better culture or advanced culture.

It's Israeli occupiers and Palestinians under occupation, and that's why Palestinians cannot realize their potential.

Besides endorsing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, Romney also stated that as president, he would look into moving the embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv. The Hill observed, "The eastern section of Jerusalem is one of the biggest points of contention in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with Palestinian leaders hoping to make it the capital of their promised state."

Romney's weekend in Israel confirmed his total support of Israel and its efforts to stop Iran's nuclear weapons proliferation. He declared,

Make no mistake, the ayatollahs in Iran are testing our moral defenses. They want to know who will object and who will look the other way. We will not look away nor will our country ever look away from our passion and commitment to Israel.... We recognize Israel's right to defend itself.

Prior to Romney's speech, his foreign policy advisor, Dan Senor, alluded to the possibility that Romney would even support an Israeli military strike on Iran:

Gov. Romney believes we should employ any and all measures to dissuade the Iranian regime from its nuclear course, and it is his fervent hope that diplomatic and economic measures will do so. In the final analysis, of course, no option should be excluded.

Senor's remarks prompted Romney to clarify his position on CBS' *Face the Nation*: "I respect the right of Israel to defend itself, and we stand with Israel in peace."

But according to *Haaretz*, Israel's oldest daily newspaper, Romney is not the only presidential candidate supporting a possible Israeli military strike on Iran. The paper reports that National Security Advisor Tom Donilon has reassured Israel that Washington is prepared to take military action against Iran in the event that diplomacy and sanctions fail to convince Iran to abandon its nuclear enrichment activities. That report indicated that Donilon presented plans to Netanyahu earlier this month to corroborate those assertions; however, an anonymous senior Israeli official insisted that the *Haaretz* article was incorrect.



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During his speech in Israel, Romney also took the opportunity to address Egypt's new "Islamist president":

The international community must use its considerable influence to insure that the new [Egyptian] government honors the peace agreement with Israel that was signed by the government of Anwar Sadat [more than three decades ago].

Photo of Mitt Romney with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: AP Images



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