

**Address of the President of Israel, Mr. Moshe Katsav  
at the Saban Forum**  
Saturday evening, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2005 at the King David Hotel,  
Jerusalem

- I wish to praise the initiative of Haim Saban, a schoolfriend of mine from the Ben Shemen Youth Village, on the dialogue of “The Saban Forum on Israel-United States of America Relations,” on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the assassination of the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and to welcome the participants in the Forum.
  
- The relations between Israel and the United States are steadfast and stable but Yitzhak Rabin, by virtue of his character and standing, brought about an increase in the respect, honor, faith and friendship of the American Administration and the American people towards the State of Israel.
  
- Since the historical decision of President Harry Truman to recognize the State of Israel, the American Presidents determined the essence and character of the relations, described them as special and declared their deep commitment to the security of Israel.

- The people of Israel has great respect and appreciation for the great American people and its leaders for their steadfast and continued support since the establishment of the State.
- The special relations express the deep partnership at the highest levels between a Super Power and a small country in a wide range of fields.
- The special relations are based on common faith, values and vision, on relations of understanding and friendship and on mutual interests. Although there is not an official treaty, the relations are anchored by tens of agreements, mutual understandings and exchange of letters, which gained the acceptance and the authorization of the two American parties, all the Administrations and also the support of the American public.
- President Bill Clinton, I praise you for your steadfast support, which derives from appreciation and faith and for your contribution towards the fortification of Israel's strength.
- The dialogue here is an expression of the deep bond of which President Clinton was one of its moulders.

- The Zionist leaders were influenced, from the beginning, by the American Revolution, by the American vision and spirit conceived by the founders of America and especially by the authors of the American constitution.
- The two countries are countries of immigrants who yearned for freedom and independence, of fighters and pioneers. The founders of America, like the leaders of the Zionist movement, based themselves on the vision of the biblical prophets.
- For us, the friendship with the United States is a strategic asset. It helps us achieve our historic vision, to gather the Jewish people in its homeland. The support of America enables us to promote political initiatives and processes in our region and deters Muslim countries and organizations, which still aim at the destruction of Israel.
- The United States is worthy of praise also for its incessant efforts to attain peace and reconciliation in the Middle East.

- The United States made a unique and historic contribution to the breakthrough in the relations between Israel and the Arab world in the peace treaty with Egypt. President Carter said at the time: "We have special relations with Israel. It is extremely essential that no one in our country or in the world, harbours any doubt that our first commitment in the Middle East, is to protect the right of Israel to exist in peace."
- Israel, too, knew the limitations of its relations with the United States, as the Ambassador of Israel in Washington, Yitzhak Rabin said to President Nixon: "Israel has never and will never request the American Administration to send American soldiers to shed their blood in our defence. We need weapons, means for fighting, technology and knowledge but we will not require American soldiers to safeguard our borders."
- President George W. Bush's document of April 2004, presents a framework for an agreement acceptable to the Palestinians and to Israel and a national consensus in Israel can be created around it.
- The United States leads the world in confronting the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and will, undoubtedly continue to allot very

extensive resources to security, to fighting world terrorism and to establishing democratic values throughout the world.

- The United States will continue, in the long run, to be the only global and strategic Super Power and it can reasonably be assumed that the technological gaps between it and its opponents and partners will not lessen.
- We must pay attention to the processes and developments taking place in our era and examine their influence on the stability of the world, on poverty and on the social differences, on the democratic processes or on national extremism and their influence on the fraternity of nations and on the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- In the last decade a war is being waged between global terrorism, lead by extremist Islam and between the Western World, lead by the United States.
- Not all the democratic countries in the free world are aware of this war. Not all the moderate Islam countries agree with this definition.

- Global terror has unlimited resources, it has no borders, nor limitations. It has incomprehensible pretensions, which appear to be insane and ridiculous but we must understand that their aim is to rule and force the extremist religious faith on humanity. The people who identify with world terror are becoming more and more extremist and fanatical in their faith and outlook.
- In the free world there is sometimes a naïve attitude, which gives rise to concern. We must open our eyes and see reality as it is. There are some who deter from direct confrontation out of fear of the reaction of terrorist organizations and there are others who are drawn to naivety by their faith in idealism.
- Within the last few years brutal and terrible terrorist attacks took place in Turkey, Indonesia, Spain, Russia, England, Kenya, Argentina, Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, Israel, the United States and other places. This is indeed a world war of extremists on the stability and peace of the world. In fact, it is a world war between the free world and the international terrorist organizations.
- It is the duty of world leaders to provide humanity with the elementary right to live without fear of terror.

- The free world must establish a combined system to combat international terror of all kinds and conduct a determined and joint fight in the economic, political, legal and security fields.
- International terrorism makes negative use of globalization, democratic values, human morality and modern technology.
- Freedom of speech, freedom of religion and individual rights are not the means for freedom of incitement, racism, murder and bloodshed. They do not provide freedom for inciting acts of disaster and destruction. Freedom to immigrate does not mean the freedom of movement of international terrorist supporters and assisting terrorist organizations.
- I am amazed to see political and academic institutions in the free world which condemn Israel's fight against terrorism, describe it as a crime against humanity and call for sanctions and embargoes against us.
- There are leaders in the free world who make a distinction between the military and political arms of the terrorist organizations. The

terrorist organizations' leaders have the same aim. The military arm performs and the political arm sends, guides and teaches.

- Human naivety is weaker in the face of evil and demagoguery.
- Evil, distortion and bad inclinations are likely to take advantage of faith and human values. Democracy does not provide immunity from evil and intimidation.
- We have seen in the past how anti-democratic elements took advantage of democracy in order to govern.
- Not one of us knows what the future holds in store, what the thinking will be in the next decade or in another generation and it is our duty to lay a moral and stable foundation for the following generations.
- Totalitarian countries, which support terrorist organizations and aim at obtaining mass destruction weapons, present a great danger to the peace and stability of the world.



- We are at present facing a wave of anti-Semitism, unprecedented since World War II. This new anti-Semitism has been created by a combination of extremist leftwing organizations, extremist right wing organizations, extremist Muslim organizations and anti-Western organizations, which are against globalization.
- The anti-Semites are also taking advantage of modern media and democracy in order to disseminate anti-Semitism to an extent and strength heretofore unknown.
- Anti-Semitism is a tragedy for the Jewish people but also a moral and historic failure for humanity, a failure of the free world leaders.
- We are witnessing strategic changes taking place in our region.
- In the past 12 years Israel has made an historical change in its attitude towards the Palestinians and has taken three historic decisions: The Oslo Agreement in 1993, the acceptance of the Roadmap, in which Israel announced its willingness to support the establishment of a Palestinian state, and now the evacuation of 25 Jewish settlements from the Gaza Strip and Northern Samaria, despite our not having had even one quiet day.

- The main struggle is not between Israel and the Palestinians. The true struggle is between the moderate and constructive Palestinian elements and the destructive and fanatic Palestinian elements.
- Unfortunately, the future of the political process in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict depends on who succeeds in the internal struggle among the Palestinians. If the rational elements win, we will be able to attain peace and reconciliation.
- If the extremist elements win, there is a danger of escalation.
- In our relations with the Palestinians we have reached an unprecedented lowest tide since 1967 but the political gaps between the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel are the narrowest since 1967. We and the Palestinians have mutual security and economic interests.
- Reconciliation and peace with the Palestinians is attainable and must not be deferred for the next decade or, even worse, for the next generation. We now have an historical opportunity, which must not be missed.

- The State of Israel is proud of its scientific and technological achievements.
- We yearn for the day when our human and scientific resources can be turned to solve the true problems of the peoples of the region and humanity, such as poverty, incurable diseases and ecological disasters, instead of turning them to fighting terrorism and against devastation and destruction.
- The two democracies, the United States of America and Israel are also judged by the equal and just opportunities they provide to everyone and our being here together under one roof with Bill Clinton and Haim Saban, is a witness to one of the basic principles of American and Israeli democracy.
- I thank you, President Bill Clinton and your wife, Hilary. You are honoured citizens of the State of Israel.