

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**US, ISRAELI LEADERS TO ADDRESS 1000+ AT J STREET
CONFERENCE OCTOBER 25-28th
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR JIM JONES TO KEYNOTE**

WASHINGTON —More than a thousand American and Israeli policy makers, opinion shapers, and activists will come together next week for J Street’s inaugural conference, the largest gathering of the burgeoning pro-Israel, pro-peace movement to date.

The three-day conference features a keynote address by **National Security Advisor Jim Jones**, to be held Tuesday at 1PM. Jones joins a roster of nearly 100 speakers from the United States and the Middle East, including former **Senator Chuck Hagel**, and former **Israeli Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami**.

Over 20 organizations from the United States and Israel are officially participating in the conference, marking an important show of cooperation and the potential for further collaboration moving forward.

“This unprecedented gathering of pro-Israel, pro-peace Americans marks a real milestone for our movement, highlighting the broad support for bold US leadership to end the conflict in the Middle East,” said Jeremy Ben-Ami, J Street’s executive director, of the conference, which will open Sunday evening.

The conference aims to frame a national conversation about how to achieve a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and a broader regional peace as the best means to secure Israel’s future as a democratic home for the Jewish people. It will offer opportunities to discuss the serious issues affecting Israel and the US-Israel relationship, to air the controversies, and to have the difficult conversations needed to resolve the conflict. It also will facilitate the building of connections and synergies among pro-Israel, pro-peace and pro-democracy groups in the American Jewish community and in Israel.

“While a commitment to a negotiated, two-state resolution to the conflict is a common denominator among participants, our goal in planning the conference was not only to bring together a group of people with varying perspectives on how to achieve this goal, but to create real forums in which they engage and challenge one another to think and do better,” Ben-Ami added. “This conference is a testament to the growing sense that resolving this conflict deserves our best collective thinking as a community and as a country.”

Programming will include five plenary sessions and thirty breakout sessions, which will take on a range of integral issues—Congress and the US-Israel relationship, settlements, Iran, human rights, and various components of movement building, among them.

The range of perspectives represented at the conference will be evident throughout the conference: Jeremy Ben-Ami and **Rabbi Eric Yoffie**, president of the Reform movement, will explore how the Jewish community should handle dissent at times of conflict; members of Congress from both parties will discuss how the definition of what it means to be pro-Israel might be changing in the 111th Congress; a panel of Iran experts will offer three distinct perspectives on whether or not diplomacy is working; and bloggers **Jonathan Chait** of *The New Republic* and **Matt Yglesias** of the Center for American Progress will debate what it means to be pro-Israel. All sessions, including the plenaries, will include significant opportunities for direct exchange between the discussants and the audience.

All sessions are open to the media and coverage is invited. A full agenda is available here: <http://www.jstreet.org/page/j-street-conference-sessions>

A gala dinner, hosted by over 150 members of Congress, will cap off the conference on Tuesday evening, honoring prominent attorney and J Street co-founder **Victor A Kovner**.

Other notable speakers include U.S. Representative **Robert Wexler** (FL-19), former Ambassador of the United States to Israel **Martin Indyk**, former head of Shin Bet **Ami Ayalon**, Palestinian Minister of National Economy **Bassem Houry**, Members of Knesset **Nitzan Horowitz**, **Shlomo Molla**, **Amir Peretz**, **Meir Sheerit**, and **Yuli Tamir**, and Jordanian Ambassador to the United States **Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein**.

On Wednesday, hundreds of conference participants will meet with members of Congress and their staff on Capitol Hill to advocate for strong American leadership in pursuit of a two-state solution and comprehensive regional peace.

All conference programming through Tuesday evening will be held at the Grand Hyatt Washington (1000 H Street, NW).

To register for the conference, please contact Amy Spitalnick, 202.248.5868 (o) / 516.521.0128 (c), amy@jstreet.org. Credentials are required.

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