

Transcript: Obama Seeks 'New Beginning' In Cairo [June 4, 2009]

Thank you very much. Good afternoon. I am honored to be in the timeless city of Cairo, and to be hosted by two remarkable institutions. For over a thousand years, Al-Azhar has stood as a beacon of Islamic learning; and for over a century, Cairo University has been a source of Egypt's advancement. And together, you represent the harmony between tradition and progress. I'm grateful for your hospitality, and the hospitality of the people of Egypt. And I'm also proud to carry with me the goodwill of the American people, and a greeting of peace from Muslim communities in my country: Assalaamu alaykum. (Applause.)

We meet at a time of great tension between the United States and Muslims around the world — tension rooted in historical forces that go beyond any current policy debate. The relationship between Islam and the West includes centuries of coexistence and cooperation, but also conflict and religious wars. More recently, tension has been fed by colonialism that denied rights and opportunities to many Muslims, and a Cold War in which Muslim-majority countries were too often treated as proxies without regard to their own aspirations. Moreover, the sweeping change brought by modernity and globalization led many Muslims to view the West as hostile to the traditions of Islam.

Violent extremists have exploited these tensions in a small but potent minority of Muslims. The attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and the continued efforts of these extremists to engage in violence against civilians has led some in my country to view Islam as inevitably hostile not only to America and Western countries, but also to human rights. All this has bred more fear and more mistrust.

So long as our relationship is defined by our differences, we will empower those who sow hatred rather than peace, those who promote conflict rather than the cooperation that can help all of our people achieve justice and prosperity. And this cycle of suspicion and discord must end.

I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles — principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings.

25 <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3726504,00.html> [Efrat Weiss 06.04.09, 18:28 / Israel News]

Yesha Council: Obama 'more Hussein than Barack'

Settler leaders slam US president's historic Cairo address as 'pandering to Islam'; Marzel: We will continue to settle the Land of Israel whether Obama likes it or not

"Only time will tell if the US president is Barack or Hussein," Yesha Council Director-General Pinchas Wallerstein said Thursday in response to Obama's historic speech in Cairo, in which called for a "new beginning between the United States and Muslims."

Yesha Council Chairman Danny Dayan was more critical of the American leader, saying "in many respects the speech pandered to Islam; it emphasized 'Hussein' more than it did 'Barak', and proved that we must not allow the Obama administration (impose its will regarding Israeli construction in the West Bank and Jerusalem). He will eventually cause us to divide Jerusalem and cede the Temple Mount."

Cairo Address

Muslims see shift in Obama speech, no breakthrough / Associated Press

Abbas spokesman says US president's Cairo speech a good start, but Hamas says statements 'did not include mechanism that can translate his wishes and views into actions'; Jakarta resident: President just trying to apologize to Muslims because of what America — or really Bush — has done in the past

"However, we must keep in mind that the decisions are made in Jerusalem," Dayan said.

The Shomron Settlers' Committee issued a statement saying "The State of Israel is paying the price for its leaders' defeatism. Hussein Obama opted to adopt the Arab's bogus versions over the Jewish truth."

Baruch Marzel, chairman of the rightist National Jewish Front movement, said in response to the speech "we will continue to settle the Land of Israel whether Obama likes it or not. Obama and American administration officials can make declarations, but the actions of the youths are what will determine the results on the ground."

National Union MKs Arie Elad and Michael Ben Ari slammed the "shocking comparison Obama made between the annihilation of Europe's Jews and the suffering Israel's Arabs inflicted upon themselves."

"The Zionist vision of settling the Land of Israel is stronger than any president or government. We survived pharaoh, and we'll survive Obama as well," Ben Ari said.

Assignment: Juxtapose phrases from Obama's speech in Cairo and Jewish reactions that are proof of irreconcilable positions.