Thank you. Thank you very much. Well, I'm delighted to be back at AIPAC, an organization I've known and worked with since the early 1980s. You know, back then, your audience numbered in the hundreds. The testament to AIPAC is that those crowds are now in the thousands as we can see today. You know, I first visited Israel in 1983 with my late dear friend Gordon Zacks.

As you all know, Gordon was a founding member of AIPAC and it was on that trip that I actually visited Bethlehem and I called my mother on Christmas night from Jerusalem. As you could imagine, it was a very, very special moment and Gordon always reminded me of it. Gordon helped me, as much as anyone has over the years, to know and to appreciate the importance of our relationship with Israel and Israel's unique security challenges and I can't think of a better guy who could've taken me to Israel.

It was on my trip in 1983 that Gordon introduced me to Avital Sharansky when her husband Natan was still in a Soviet prison. She told me her husband's story over lunch at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem and said she was going to Washington to plead for his release. I asked her, would you mind if I organized a rally in support of your husband on the steps of the Capitol. And so we came together in a bipartisan way to call for Natan Sharansky's release.

You know, Gordy had taken Sharansky into the Oval Office to meet with President Reagan and when the meeting ended, Mrs. Sharansky was told by the president, I will not rest until your husband is free. Sharansky's story has always inspired me from the day that Gordy first introduced me to Avital, but I don't know how many of you here have ever read his book, "Fear No Evil."

Natan wrote in that book, as I related to him, and he said, I'm glad that you saw it, that when they went to him in the prison, they wanted him to confess something and they said to Natan, you understand that Galileo even confessed. And think about Sharansky sitting in that prison in that solitary confinement and he thought to himself and told them, you're using Galileo against me, no one will ever use me against any other prisoner of conscience. For that, he deserves to always be remembered.

I had a phone conversation with Natan for years, but I never had the chance to meet him. And ironically, I met him at the cemetery when we laid Gordy Zacks to rest where Natan gave the eulogy on behalf of our great friend. Look, I want it to be clear to all of you that I remain unwavering in my support for the Jewish state and the unique partnership between the United States and Israel.

When I was first introduced to Israel and some of its leaders, of course, the core of our partnership with Israel was already very well defined and we give thanks to Harry Truman for the courageous steps he took when Israel was first established. And I applaud our continuing legacy of support for the Jewish state and the struggles inventiveness and vitality of the Jewish people. This legacy is one that I will not only honor in my administration, but will take active steps to strengthen and expand.

I want you all to know something very special to me, because it was at a ceremony recognizing the Holocaust that as governor, I proposed that we build a permanent memorial so that people, and particularly our young people, could understand the history and the lesson of man's inhumanity to man and the incredible suffering visited upon the Jews across the globe. I worked with some prominent Ohioans as the Rapners, the Schottensteins, the Wexners and many other members of the Jewish community, over three years to make it happen.

They told me it could not be done and I said, you watch me, we will build a memorial. The memorial finally was designed by Daniel Libeskind and it was the first of its kind in the nation. And you all, please come to Columbus and look at it, it is just beautiful.

But I want to tell you that a very good friend of mine, Victor Goodman, a prominent member of the Jewish community in Ohio asked me to take him over to look at that memorial before it was unveiled. We walked over behind the tarp, I had my arm around his shoulder and we read the inscription and the memorial together.

And I will never forget when he finished reading it, he buried his head in my chest and wept, and we wept together. And he looked at me and said, John, thank you for what you have done here, this will exist as long as the State of Ohio exists. As you may know, I served on the House Arms Services Committee for 18 years and I worked to implement Ronald Reagan's strategy to revitalize our military and to defeat the Soviet Union.

Together, my colleagues in Congress and I gave our alliance with Israel meaning. We assured Israel's continuing qualitative military edge by authoring the initial $10 million for the Arrow Iron Dome Anti-Missile Program that we know is so critical to the security of Israel.

We supported the Phantom 2000 program guaranteeing Israeli air superiority with the latest fighters and the transfer of reactive armor technology that has made the Israeli tanks so effective. I think it can be fairly said that my support and friendship for our strategic partner Israel has been firm and unwavering for more than 35 years of my professional life.

Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, has in turn been faithful and dependable friends. The American friends of Israel are not fair-weather friends, they recognize the strategic hinge with Israel and that America's and Israel's interests are tightly intertwined, despite our inevitable disagreements from time to time. We share a critically important common interest in the Middle East, the unrelenting opposition to Iran's attempts to develop nuclear weapons.

In March 2015, when the prime minister spoke out against the Iran nuclear deal before a joint session of Congress, I flew to Washington and stood on the floor of the House of Representatives that was in session the first time I had visited since we had been in session in 15 years and I did it to show my personal respect to the people of Israel.

And I want you all to know that I have called for the suspension of the U.S.'s participation in the Iran nuclear deal in reaction to Iran's recent ballistic missile tests.

These tests were both a violation of the spirit of the nuclear deal and provocations that can no longer be ignored. One of the missiles tested had printed on it in Hebrew, can you believe this, “Israel must be exterminated.” And I will instantly gather the world and lead us to reapply sanctions if Iran violates one crossed T or one dot of that nuclear deal. We must put the sanctions back on them as the world community together.

Let me also tell you, no amount of money that's being made by any business will stand in the way of the need to make sure that the security of Israel is secured and that Iran does not have a nuclear weapon. No amount of money can push us in the wrong direction and I want you to be assured that in a Kasich administration, there will be no more delusional agreements with self-declared enemies. No more.

And as the candidate in this race, with the deepest and most far reaching foreign policy and national security experience, ladies and gentlemen, I don't need on-the-job training, I will not have to learn about the dangers facing this country and our allies, I have lived these matters for decades.

On day one in the Oval Office, I will have in place a solid team of experienced and dedicated people who will implement a long-term strategic program to assure the security and safety of this country and that of its allies, such as Israel. I will lead and make decisions and my national security appointees will work tirelessly with Israel to counter Iran's regional aggression and sponsorship of terror. We will help to interdict weapon supplies to Hezbollah. We will defeat ISIS in Syria and Iraq.

And we will assist Israel to interdict Iranian arm supplies and financial flows to Hamas.

And let me stress, I will also work to build and expand on Israel's newfound regional relations as a result of the flawed Iran nuclear deal, amazing. Israel and the Arab Gulf states are now closer than ever. The bad news here is that the U.S. is not part of this new web of relations. I will work to participate in, expand and strengthen those ties.

Israelis live in one of the world's roughest neighborhoods and Iran is not the only threat that the U.S. and Israel both face there. ISIS, headquartered in Syria and Iraq, is a mortal peril and of course, ladies and gentlemen, its spread must be stopped.

Since it is dedicated to destruction in Israel, the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Asia and the United States, it is a threat to all civilization unless we recognize and unite around the central truth, we will remain committed to an ineffective and piecemeal approach to dealing with ISIS. Because the world recognizes the existential threat posed by ISIS, I believe I can lead a regional and NATO coalition to defeat ISIS, both from the air and on the ground in Syria and in Iraq.

We are all in this together. I will also provide support and relief to our common ally Jordan that has shared the brunt of refugee flows and I will bring our troops home as soon as we, together with our allies, have created a realistic prospect that regional powers can conclude a settlement guaranteeing long-term security there.

I will then support allied coalitions as they destroy ISIS's various regional affiliates, my administration will cooperate with our allies to deny Libya's oil as a resource, deny Libya as a platform to mount a tax against Europe and disband what has become a hub for acts of terror throughout Africa. I will support our common vital ally Egypt in its efforts to destroy the insurgency in Sinai and terrorists infiltrating from Libya.

And I will provide the Afghan national security forces with the key aircraft and support needed to defeat the Taliban, al-Qaeda and ISIS and then I will bring our troops in Afghanistan back home.

Insurgent states such as Iran, and network transnational terrorist actors such as ISIS, are not the only threats that Israel, the Jewish-American community and America together face. Believe me, a Kasich Administration will work from the beginning to block and eliminate any form of intolerance, bigotry, racism or anti-Semitism, whether domestic or international, particularly in international bodies.

I condemn all attempts to isolate, pressure and delegitimize the State of Israel and I will support Congress's efforts to allow this activity, both here and in the EU and I am also very concerned about rising attacks on Israel and Jewish students on our college campuses.

I pledge to use the full force of the White House to fight discourage and I will make sure we have the tools needed to protect students from hate speech, harassment and intimidation while supporting free speech on our college campuses.

I have been horrified by the recent spat of Palestinian attacks on Israeli citizens. These are not spontaneous actions of lone wolves; they are part of an unprecedented wave of terror that has involved over 200 attacks on Israelis since October 2015, and they are the outcome of a culture of death that the Palestinian Authority and its forbearers have promoted for over 50 years.

Indoctrination of hate has long been part of a planned and well-thought-out strategy. Palestinian children are raised in a culture that glorifies martyrdom and the willingness to die and the pursuit of killing or maiming Israelis. Children's textbooks have been filled with vile anti-Semitism. Families of suicide killers receive an annuity after they kill and maim.

Imprisoned terrorist receive stipends and are guaranteed jobs in the Palestinian civil service at a salary determined by the length of their sentence. Public squares, streets and even soccer tournaments are named after terrorists. If they truly want peace with Israel, then Palestinians cannot continue to promote a culture of hatred and death. We must make it clear that we will not tolerate such behavior.

And I do not believe there is any prospect for a permanent peace until the Palestinian Authority and their friends in Hamas and Hezbollah are prepared to take real steps to live in peace with Israel and recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and this violence is unacceptable.

In the meantime, we can best advance stability in the region by providing Israel our 100 percent support. We can make sure Israel has what it needs to defend itself with weapons, information, technology, political solidarity and working quietly to facilitate Palestinian and Israeli efforts at reconciliation. This is what would be expected of a dependable ally.

Folks, let me conclude by talking about the greatest alliances are those with countries, such as Israel, where we share a community of values. The post-war international system that we and our allies build upon these common values, of course, is under challenge or attack and that's why we have to recommit ourselves to those values.

We must not shy away from proclaiming and celebrating them and why we must revitalize our alliances to defend and expand the international system, build upon those values, a system that has prevented global conflict and lifted over two billion people out of poverty in the last 70 years. In doing this, we cannot go it alone. We must hang together and be realistic about what we can achieve, we cannot be neutral in defending our allies either. We must be counted on to stand by and invest in our friends instead of abusing them and incurring favor with our enemies.

For effective governance, in our democracy and for the sake of the future, we have to work together at home as well across party and ideological lines whenever and wherever possible. This is exactly what I've done in the course of my career in public service. I reached out to the other side countless times to see how we can sit together and achieve the progress that America wants and deserves.

And we all look back to the time of Ronald Reagan and his meetings with Tip O'Neill where they came together to put America first, politics and partisanships second; and Reagan, as he reached across the aisle to Tip O'Neill, very partisan, legendary, they managed to hammer out deals that gave Reagan victories in revitalizing our economy and implementing the military buildup that ended the Cold War.

But it took a conscious effort and an attitude of wanting to cooperate. So this is what I want to do, Republicans and Democrats who are here today, we need to work together with Congress on an agenda that serves the interests of the nation as a whole. We are Americans before we are Republicans or Democrats. We are Americans.

And let me tell you, in regard to that, I will not take the low road to the highest office in the land, I will not do it.

Yes. We will rededicate ourselves to reaching the bipartisan national security policy that President Reagan and the Democrats achieved and you can be assured that my strategic program will include and incorporate Israel as the bedrock partner for our mutual security in the Middle East. Together, we will combat violence incited in Israel itself and of course, its eternal capital, Jerusalem.

Thank you. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here today in front of so many of you who have contributed so much. I'm humbled by the chance to stand here at this incredible gathering of people who so much love America and so much love our great ally, Israel. You see, we're connected together. It's about civilization, it's about peace, it's about love, it's about togetherness; it's about healing the world.

The great Jewish tradition is everyone lives a life a little bigger than themselves and that tradition has worked its way deep into my soul where I tell people all across America, dig down deep, the Lord has made you special, live a life bigger than yourself, lift others, heal, provide hope, provide progress and with that, the rest of this century and the relationship between the United States and Israel will grow stronger and stronger for the benefit and mutual security of the world. Thank you all very much and God bless you.