

2008 Republican Middle East Platform

The momentum of change in the Middle East has been in the right direction. From Morocco to the Gulf States, the overall trend has been toward cooperation and social and economic development, especially with regard to the rights of women. We acknowledge the substantial assistance the U.S. has received from most governments in the region in the war on terror. Those countries that have made peace with Israel, whether officially or in fact, deserve our appreciation and assistance. We urge the continued isolation of groups like Hamas and Hezbollah because they do not meet the standards of the international community. We call for the restoration of Lebanon's independence and sovereignty and the full implementation of all UN resolutions concerning that country. The struggle in which we are engaged is ideological, not ethnic or religious. The extremists we face are abusers of faith, not its champions. We appreciate the loyalty of all Americans whose family roots lie in the Middle East, and we gratefully acknowledge the contributions of American Arabs and Muslims, especially those in the Armed Forces and the intelligence community.

Israel is a vigorous democracy, unique in the Middle East. We reaffirm America's commitment to Israel's security and will ensure that Israel maintains a qualitative edge in military technology over any potential adversaries. Israel must have secure, defensible borders and we support its right to exist as a Jewish state able to defend itself against homicide bombings, rocket and mortar fire, and other attacks against its people. We support the vision of two democratic states living in peace and security: Israel, with Jerusalem as its capital, and Palestine. For that to become a reality, the Palestinian people must support leaders who reject terror, embrace the institutions and ethos of democracy, and respect the rule of law. We call on Arab governments throughout the region to help advance that goal. We support Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel and moving the American embassy to that undivided capital of Israel. The U.S. seeks a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, negotiated between the parties themselves, without the imposition of an artificial timetable, and without the demand that Israel deal with entities which continue to pledge her destruction. At the heart of any peace process must be a mutual commitment to resolve all issues through negotiation. Part of that process must be a just, fair, and realistic framework for dealing with the Palestinian refugee issue. Like all other elements in a meaningful agreement, this matter can be settled only on the basis of mutually agreed changes that reflect today's realities as well as tomorrow's hopes.