

How will the Republican-controlled House affect U.S.-Israel ties?

Republicans are expected to take a tougher stance on Iran and put pressure on Obama administration to be easier on Israel.

By Natasha Mozgovaya

The Republican's victory in the House of Representatives on Tuesday leaves many in Israel wondering whether President Barack Obama's stymied domestic agenda will encourage him to concentrate more on foreign policy, including the Middle East peace process.

The Republicans are expected to take a tougher stance on Iran and put pressure on the Obama administration to be easier on Israel. Eric Cantor (R-Virginia), who is expected to become House Majority Leader and thus the highest ranking Jewish member of the House, told Haaretz last week that a "[Republican] Congress would have a tangible impact on improving the U.S.-Israel relationship."

"The system of checks and balances permits us to apply oversight to the administration's foreign policy," he said. "If we regain the majority, we will use our larger platform to make the case that a strong Israel is firmly in the strategic and moral interests of the United States. We will press the administration not to pressure Israel into making concessions that will compromise Israel's already tenuous security."

John Boehner (R-Ohio), expected to be the new Speaker of the House of Representatives, is considered to be pro-Israel, despite recent criticism by Jewish Democrats for his support of Tea Party candidate Rich Lott who used to participate in reenactions of World War II battles wearing a Nazi officer uniform.

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Florida) is expected to replace Howard Berman (D-California) as the chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Ros-Lehtinen is one of the most active House members on the issues related to Israel.

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