

Obama and Netanyahu: Divergence and Convergence

by [David Makovsky \(/experts/david-makovsky\)](#)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Between May 19 and May 24, 2011, President Barack Obama and Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu delivered three landmark speeches that generated significant controversy regarding the status of relations between the two leaders and Washington's near-term plans for the peace process. At a time when the Palestinian Authority seems bent on sharing power with Hamas and seeking statehood recognition via the UN, understanding Washington and Israel's stances is crucial. In this Policy Note, David Makovsky spells out both the causes of the controversy and the steps the Obama administration should take to avoid exacerbating an already tense situation.

the author

David Makovsky is the Ziegler distinguished fellow and director of the [Project on the Middle East Peace Process](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateI02.php?SID=16&newActiveSubNav=Project%20on%20the%20Middle%20East%20Peace%20Process&activeSubNavLink=templateI02.php%3FSID%3D16&newActiveNav=researchPrograms) (<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateI02.php?SID=16&newActiveSubNav=Project%20on%20the%20Middle%20East%20Peace%20Process&activeSubNavLink=templateI02.php%3FSID%3D16&newActiveNav=researchPrograms>) at The Washington Institute. His most recent work includes the interactive map project [Imagining the Border: Options for Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Territorial Issue](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC04.php?CID=301) (<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC04.php?CID=301>).

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