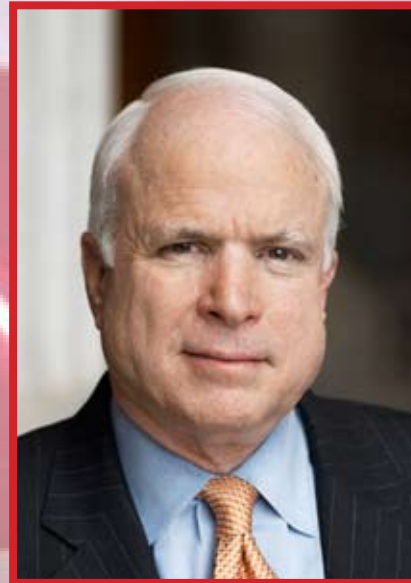




SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON,
D-NY



SENATOR JOHN M^CCAIN,
R-AZ



SENATOR BARACK OBAMA,
D-IL



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2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE



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2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTION INDEX

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS	1	The United States and Israel are committed to a two-state solution. But Hamas, a terrorist organization committed to the destruction of Israel, was elected and now controls a significant portion of the Palestinian population and territory. As President of the United States, what specific steps would you take to reach the objective of a democratic Palestinian state alongside a safe, secure Israel?	3 - 4
	2	The government of Israel has announced that it is prepared to withdraw from a large portion of the West Bank as part of the peace agreement. However, a majority of Israelis oppose further concessions without first removing Hamas from power. Would your administration pressure Israel to make further territorial compromises prior to removing the Hamas threat?	5
	3	Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that she would leave it to the next administration to determine if the U.S. would participate in the 2009 Durban Conference, a conference that Canada recently announced it would not attend given that the 2001 Durban Conference quickly degenerated into anti-American and anti-Israel hate-mongering. Would you cancel the participation of the United States at this year's Conference?	6
	4	A nuclear Iran is widely perceived to be a threat to the Middle East and world peace. Could you conceive of any circumstances in which your administration would accept a nuclear Iran? If not, what steps would your administration be willing to take to stop them?	7
	5	In November 1947, the United Nations voted to endorse the creation of the Jewish State. Today, some say that Israel should give up its unique Jewish character in order pursue peace. As President, would you continue America's historic support of Israel as a democratic Jewish State?	8
	6	It is now seven years since 9/11. Are you committed to continue the war on terrorism? What would your administration do to hunt down the top Al-Qaeda leadership?	9 - 10
	7	Tragically, the threat of genocide remains a fact of life in 2008. As President of the United States, would you ever consider sending American troops to Darfur or other areas suffering humanitarian crises?	11 - 12
DOMESTIC ISSUES	8	Racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and homophobia, fuelled in part by religious demagoguery and manipulation of the Internet, are a reality both here and abroad. What specific steps would your administration take to combat this rising scourge?	13 - 14
	9	Historically, the United States has always been the strongest economic power in the world. But today, the dollar is at the lowest we've seen in decades. What new ideas would you bring to the table to reverse this troubling trend?	15 - 16
	10	How would your administration deal with the immigration issue?	17

SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER 2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1

The United States and Israel are committed to a two-state solution. But Hamas, a terrorist organization committed to the destruction of Israel, was elected and now controls a significant portion of the Palestinian population and territory. As President of the United States, what specific steps would you take to reach the objective of a democratic Palestinian state alongside a safe, secure Israel?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

I believe that Israel's right to exist in safety as a Jewish state, with defensible borders and secure from violence and terrorism, must never be questioned. Having visited Israel more than half a dozen times on both political and personal trips, I have a first-hand understanding of the challenges that Israel faces and I have consistently stood and will always stand with Israel in its fight against terrorism.



I understand that real peace for Israel requires recognition and acceptance of the Jewish state by the Arab world and the international community, which too often seek to ostracize and condemn Israel. For that reason, I have been a leader against anti-Israel bias and discrimination around the world. Outraged by the exclusion of Magen David Adom from the International Red Cross, I sponsored legislation that placed limitations on U.S. contributions to the International Committee of the Red Cross until it recognized MDA, urged the Swiss government to find a solution that would bestow full participation for MDA, and spoke out tirelessly on this issue until the ICRC finally accepted MDA.

Similarly, inciting Palestinian children to hatred only serves to sow the seeds of conflict for generations to come. I have repeatedly spoken out against Palestinian school textbooks that reject Israel's right to exist and describe Israel's founding as "a catastrophe that is unprecedented in history." I led the charge against this propaganda, which indoctrinates instead of educates Palestinian children and actively prevents these young people from seeing Israel as a neighbor to live beside in peace.

I support a peace process that will generate genuine security for Israel, an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and normal, peaceful relations with the Arab states. I believe that U.S. diplomacy is critical to resolving this conflict, and we must engage in regional diplomacy to gain Arab support for a Palestinian leadership that is committed to peace, rejects violence, and is willing to make the painful compromises necessary to end the conflict. The Palestinian Authority needs to redouble its efforts against those who want to destroy the hope for peace through violence by ending incitement and fighting terrorism. It is critical that we engage in the efforts to achieve secure peace for Israel, especially given the context of increasing threats from Iran, Syria, Hamas, and Hezbollah. *(continued on following page)*

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Israel, just as any other sovereign country, has an absolute right to defend her citizens from horrific and repeated terrorist attacks whether by bullets, rockets or suicide bombers. If there is any hope for a permanent peace, Palestinians must demonstrate that they will halt the terrorist assaults upon Israel and her people. But real peace won't be achieved so long as the Hamas government refuses to renounce suicide bombings and other terrorist acts or even acknowledge Israel's right to exist. As recent history unfortunately demonstrates, the Palestinians are not now able to make the compromises necessary for a lasting peace.



Peace also will not be achieved with the Iranian-backed Hezbollah rearming itself and with a Syria that supports terrorism and undermines Lebanon's sovereignty. To move toward real peace, the international community must begin to hold accountable governments who sponsor terrorist groups with arms, money and other support.

"It has rightly been the goal of many U.S. and Israeli governments to seek a lasting and secure peace. As President, I would reaffirm our commitment to a two-state solution that would allow Israelis and Palestinians to live in states where they are safe, free and able to build a better future for themselves and their families. But such a solution requires two parties to negotiate that are both willing and able to address the issues. In the 1990s, Israel made concessions to a Palestinian Authority that may have been able to reach peace but was clearly not willing. Today, some of the leadership of the Palestinian Authority may be willing to make peace, but is, unfortunately, not able to deliver results."

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

Israel is our most reliable ally in the Middle East, and the region's only established democracy. Ensuring Israelis security will always be the starting point of my Middle East policy. To that end, I strongly support the United States continuing to provide Israel with the military assistance and defense cooperation it needs to maintain a qualitative military edge with which it can defend itself from threats that come from as far as Iran and as close as Gaza. We will always stand with Israel if it comes under attack.



Ultimately, the best way to ensure Israelis security is through achieving lasting peace agreements with its neighbors. When I am president, I will make a personal commitment to an ongoing effort by the United States to help Israel and the Palestinians achieve the goal of two states living side by side in peace and security. We should be an active partner, lending support, offering ideas, and bolstering agreements that the parties reach. In the end, any peace agreement must ultimately be forged by Israelis and Palestinians. The United States cannot dictate the terms. However, there is an important role for the United States in the process. When the U.S. disengages, as the Bush Administration did for its first seven years, the situation deteriorates. While negotiations on the core issues of borders, Jerusalem, refugees, and security are ongoing, we should encourage both sides to take actions to improve conditions on the ground. And we should provide leadership to encourage Arab states and others to do more to strengthen moderate Palestinians who are committed to two states, to isolate extremists like Hamas, and to reach out to Israel to show that they are committed to normalizing relations.

Jerusalem is obviously one of the most sensitive issues of this conflict. As far back as the Camp David accords it was made a permanent status issue. In Oslo, it was also treated as a permanent status issue. What that meant is that its status would be resolved by the negotiations. No one should want or expect those negotiations to redivide Jerusalem with barbed wire and check points, as it was until 1967. Whatever the outcome of those negotiations, one thing is clear: Jerusalem will always be the capital of Israel. As such, our embassy should be in Jerusalem.



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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1

The United States and Israel are committed to a two-state solution. But Hamas, a terrorist organization committed to the destruction of Israel, was elected and now controls a significant portion of the Palestinian population and territory. As President of the United States, what specific steps would you take to reach the objective of a democratic Palestinian state alongside a safe, secure Israel?
(continued from previous page)

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

(continued from previous page) I also believe that the U.S. government's role is to support Israel as it makes the tough choices for peace and that the final status issues should be negotiated by the parties themselves, with the United States playing a facilitating role. When I am President, I will strongly support the effort by both parties to negotiate peace.

I have a deep and abiding commitment to a strong U.S.-Israel relationship – one rooted in the shared tradition of open democracy, free expression, women's rights, and the rule of law, reinforced by our shared interest for peace, freedom, and prosperity. I believe that this unbreakable bond, which has been a hallmark of American foreign policy for more than 50 years, must continue to be the cornerstone of America's Middle East policy. I believe Israel is a critical strategic ally against the dangers of terrorism and radicalism. I have proven this commitment by consistently leading the way in support of legislation that strengthens this mutually-beneficial relationship.

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA



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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

2

The government of Israel has announced that it is prepared to withdraw from a large portion of the West Bank as part of the peace agreement. However, a majority of Israelis oppose further concessions without first removing Hamas from power. Would your administration pressure Israel to make further territorial compromises prior to removing the Hamas threat?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

I will pursue a foreign policy that engages the world, but also stands up against tyranny and terror. The Hamas terror campaign has claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent civilians in Israel. As a co-sponsor of the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act in 2006, I voted to prevent U.S. foreign assistance going to a Palestinian government in which Hamas was a participant. I believe that Hamas and indeed all Palestinian groups need to demonstrate clearly and unequivocally their commitment to peace by renouncing violence and terror, recognizing Israel's right to exist, and complying with previously signed agreements. It would be counter-productive to pressure Israel to make concessions. Successive Israeli governments have made clear that in the context of the peace process they are willing to make painful territorial concessions. The U.S. role should be to help create the circumstances in which those concessions, freely entered into by the government of Israel, will produce a real, lasting and secure peace.



SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

No. I would work to further isolate the enemies of Israel such as Iran, Syria, Hamas and Hezbollah, and I would never pressure Israel to make concessions to states or movements committed to its destruction. The international community should hold Hamas and its sponsors accountable for their support of terrorists and terrorism. My administration will always stand with Israel in our united struggle against Islamic extremists and their state sponsors.



SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

No. Israel has demonstrated many times that it is prepared to negotiate a two-state solution with the Palestinians. Prime Minister Olmert was elected with that mandate. But I understand the dilemma that Israelis face: they crave peace, and yet are concerned about whether or not they have a Palestinian partner who is both committed to peace, and capable of fulfilling its commitments. Hamas is a terrorist organization, and I support the international community's conditions they must meet before they can be part of any dialogue -- renounce violence, recognize Israel, and abide by past agreements. But President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad are committed to peace with Israel. The question is, can they deliver. Israel is right to ask this question, and probe carefully for the answer, and then to reach its own decisions, free from U.S. pressure, about whether its security will be served by a deal with these partners. One of the most important roles the U.S. can play is to build up the capabilities and strengthen the hand of Palestinian moderates, which is also in Israel's security interests, and I am committed to do that.





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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

3

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that she would leave it to the next administration to determine if the U.S. would participate in the 2009 Durban Conference, a conference that Canada recently announced it would not attend given that the 2001 Durban Conference quickly degenerated into anti-American and anti-Israel hate-mongering. Would you cancel the participation of the United States at this year's Conference?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

The U.N.'s 2001 debacle in Durban must not be allowed to repeat itself. No one will ever forget how the world's first Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance made a mockery of its own effort to banish the scourge of racism globally. I was appalled when a meeting designed to condemn racism became the forum for the distribution of anti-Semitic cartoons, leaflets and other demonstrations of naked hatred and bigotry against Jews.



As President, I pledge to resolutely fight all efforts to inject anti-Semitism, hatred and discrimination onto the agenda of Durban II, scheduled for 2009, and I call on U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour and heads of state from around the world to lend full force of their offices to prevent that from happening. Particularly with Iran, now the global seat of anti-Semitic rhetoric, on the organizing committee, the need for vigilance and forceful action to redeem this conference is essential.

When I am President, the United States will lead a boycott of the conference should current efforts to rein in the forces of hatred fail. We must not accept, condone or participate in a conference that can be hijacked by an agenda of hatred, and we must work strenuously to ensure that our friends do not do so either. I applaud the strong redline laid down by President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, who announced that France would disengage from the Conference if the "excesses and abuses" from 2001 return to the agenda of Durban II.

Non-governmental organizations also have a special responsibility to resist efforts to pollute the NGO forum at Durban II. To prevent a repeat of 2001, American philanthropic organizations must carefully review the objectives of the NGOs they sponsor for the conference, ensuring that none will come to Durban with pernicious agendas. Respected human rights organizations participating in Durban II should be prepared to swiftly and resolutely denounce any group that allows hatred to infect the proceedings.

The U.N. is an essential arena for political debate among nations, but we must not let it be misused as a forum for anti-Semitism or incitement against any group. The credibility of the U.N. and its core human rights machinery is at stake, and thus far the signs are pointing in the wrong direction. We must not repeat the tragedy of the first Durban conference, and now is the time to lay down clear markers against such an outcome.

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

"Yes. I strongly support effective, multilateral diplomacy as a critical tool on our foreign policy arsenal, but that does not extend to participation in fatally flawed organizations or conferences that only serve to attack America and our allies."



SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

The 2001 Durban Conference did indeed degenerate into an ugly display of anti-Israel outrages. The issue of racism is an important one that needs to be addressed, but it must be done so responsibly. I would work to ensure that the 2009 Durban Conference is not led off the rails as was its predecessor, and that would be the basis for U.S. participation. If our efforts to keep the conference on a responsible path are not working, and the conference planning committee is not cooperative, the U.S. will not participate.





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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

4

A nuclear Iran is widely perceived to be a threat to the Middle East and world peace. Could you conceive of any circumstances in which your administration would accept a nuclear Iran? If not, what steps would your administration be willing to take to stop them?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

Iran with nuclear weapons would threaten the vital interests of the United States, which include the security of Israel, prevention of a Middle East nuclear arms race, and the free flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. To prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, I support vigorous diplomacy to organize the international community behind an American-led effort to end Teheran's nuclear weapons program. The November 2007 NIE confirms that the approach that I have long advocated, a policy that combines diplomatic pressure and incentives, carrots and sticks, is the right one. I believe the Bush administration's policy of refusing to talk to our adversaries has been very damaging to our security. We should pursue the kind of carrot-and-stick diplomacy with Iran that has been effective with North Korea and Libya. When I am President, I will use all necessary tools to stop Iran's support for terrorism, to overcome its opposition to the peace process, to cut its sponsorship of militias in Iraq, and to end its nuclear ambitions once and for all.



I have issued statements denouncing the Iranian President's anti-Israel rhetoric and denial of the Holocaust, and called on Secretary Rice to place the United States at the forefront of delivering a strong, united, and unambiguous condemnation before the international community. I have said that as President I would not commit to personal meetings with leaders of rogue states, such as Iran. In dealing with our adversaries, I would plan carefully, and lay the groundwork first, and make sure that we achieve meaningful progress as the most responsible way to enhance U.S. security. During the Cold War, we spoke to the Soviet Union while thousands of missiles were pointed at our cities, while its leaders threatened to bury us, while the regime sowed discord and military uprisings and actions against our allies. That was a smart strategy used by Republican and Democratic Presidents alike, even though it was often a difficult one.

I believe we must engage in vigorous diplomacy to ensure that Iran does not get nuclear weapons. I have said that if Iran is in fact willing to end its nuclear weapons program, renounce sponsorship of terrorism and its opposition to the peace process, and play a constructive role in stabilizing Iraq, the United States should be prepared to offer Iran a carefully calibrated set of incentives. This will let the Iranian people know that our quarrel is not with them but with their government and show the world that the United States is prepared to pursue every diplomatic option.

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

The world's chief state sponsor of international terrorism, Iran, defines itself by hostility to Israel and the United States. It is simply tragic that millennia of proud Persian history have culminated in a government today that cannot be counted among those of the world's civilized nations. When the president of Iran calls for Israel to be wiped off of the map, or asks for a world without Zionism, or suggests that Israel's Jewish population return to Europe, or calls the Holocaust a myth, it is clear that we are dealing with an evil man and a very dangerous regime. Coupled with its ballistic missile arsenal, an Iranian nuclear capability would pose an immediate and existential threat to the State of Israel and the region. UN Security Council action is required to impose progressively tougher political and economic sanctions. Should the Security Council continue to drag its feet, the U.S. must lead a group of like-minded countries in imposing multilateral sanctions outside the UN framework. The opposition of Russia and China to effective sanctions on Iran – and on issues ranging from Myanmar to Darfur to North Korea – is why I proposed the creation of a League of Democracies in which Israel would be welcomed. When democracies are united in addressing threats like Iran, we cannot afford to allow autocracies to thwart action.



There are many ways to increase pressure on Iran. Financial sanctions have had an initial effect. Iran's need to import refined gasoline, to cite one example, suggests an important vulnerability. And countries such as China and Malaysia, which have signed deals to develop Iranian gas fields, and Russia, which provides weapons systems to Tehran, should know that Iran will be a critical element in America's bilateral relations with each nation. In the meantime, the U.S. should immediately investigate whether any of these deals violate the terms of the Iran Freedom Support Act. The U.S. should also privatize the sanctions effort by launching a disinvestment campaign. By persuading individuals, pension funds, and financial institutions to divest from companies doing business with Iran, we can isolate and delegitimize a hostile government. We will also, as we did with the South Africa disinvestment campaign, increase the debate inside the country about whether the present course serves the interests of the Iranian people or merely those of a misguided elite. Americans and all proponents of freedom need to reassure the millions of Iranians who aspire to self-determination that we support their longing for freedom and democracy. There is much more we can and should do to translate such support into concrete action.

It is not in the U.S. interest or in the world's interest to permit Iran to develop a nuclear weapon. It is simply too dangerous to permit such dangerous weapons to be under the control of a radical theocracy. It would pose a grave threat to Israel. To ensure Iran does not develop a nuclear weapon, we need the kind of sustained, aggressive and unconditional diplomacy that I have long supported. Such diplomacy -- coupled with a clear indication that all options remain on the table -- will ensure that we can impose the tough sanctions and increased economic pressure that will be required to show Iran that its refusal to live up to its international commitments has real costs. At the same time, we should show Iran -- again through principled diplomacy -- that there will be benefits to its living up to its international obligations and ending its nuclear program. By providing carrots in the form of potential normalized relations over time, we may dissuade Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapons capability. As importantly, if such efforts fail, we will have shown our allies -- and countries like Russia and China -- that we have tried every option, thereby increasing the likelihood the world will support more coercive measures to dissuade Iran.

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

It is not in the U.S. interest or in the world's interest to permit Iran to develop a nuclear weapon. It is simply too dangerous to permit such dangerous weapons to be under the control of a radical theocracy. It would pose a grave threat to Israel. To ensure Iran does not develop a nuclear weapon, we need the kind of sustained, aggressive and unconditional diplomacy that I have long supported. Such diplomacy -- coupled with a clear indication that all options remain on the table -- will ensure that we can impose the tough sanctions and increased economic pressure that will be required to show Iran that its refusal to live up to its international commitments has real costs. At the same time, we should show Iran -- again through principled diplomacy -- that there will be benefits to its living up to its international obligations and ending its nuclear program. By providing carrots in the form of potential normalized relations over time, we may dissuade Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapons capability. As importantly, if such efforts fail, we will have shown our allies -- and countries like Russia and China -- that we have tried every option, thereby increasing the likelihood the world will support more coercive measures to dissuade Iran.





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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

5

In November 1947, the United Nations voted to endorse the creation of the Jewish State. Today, some say that Israel should give up its unique Jewish character in order pursue peace. As President, would you continue America's historic support of Israel as a democratic Jewish State?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

I believe that Israel's right to exist in safety as a Jewish state, with defensible borders, and secure from violence and terrorism must never be questioned. Peace will require the recognition of Israel as the homeland for the Jewish people, just as a Palestinian state will be recognized as the homeland for the Palestinian people.



I have a deep and abiding commitment to a strong U.S.-Israel relationship – one rooted in the shared tradition of open democracy, free expression, women's rights, and the rule of law, reinforced by our shared interest in peace, freedom, and prosperity. I believe that this unbreakable bond, which has been a hallmark of American foreign policy for almost 60 years, must continue to be a cornerstone of America's Middle East policy, and in the world. I believe Israel is a critical strategic ally against the dangers of terrorism and radicalism. I have proven this commitment by consistently leading the way in support of legislation that strengthens this mutually-beneficial relationship.

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Yes. Israel has never had the opportunity to take a holiday from history, for it has been tested more, in less time, than any nation on Earth. The tests continue today in the form of suicide bombers and rocket fire, and in the existential threats issued routinely by the Iranian president.



Long considered a dear friend to America, today Israel is our natural ally in what is a titanic struggle against Islamic extremists – an enemy whose sinister nature I need not explain to the people of Israel.

If elected President of the United States, I will strengthen America's bedrock commitment to the security of the State of Israel.

I strongly support increased US assistance, to include providing needed military equipment and technology, for our democratic ally Israel in order to maintain its qualitative military edge relative to its regional adversaries as they acquire and seek more potent military capabilities -- often from outside suppliers, such as Russia in the case of Syria and Iran. Israel's enemies are too numerous, its margin of error too small, and our shared interests and values too great for any other position.

Just as important is the strengthening of our diplomatic ties. As President, I will invite Israel to play a leading role in the League of Democracies that I have proposed – an organization of like-minded nations working together in the cause of peace - so there are educational and employment opportunities beyond the madrassas and the jihadists.

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

I am fully committed to ensuring that Israel survives, and thrives, as a democratic Jewish state. A Jewish state of Israel and a peaceful Palestinian state living side-by-side in peace and security would help advance that goal. But in any final status agreement, Palestinian refugees could not interpret their right of return literally, as to do so would threaten Israel's status as a Jewish state.



Compensation and other mechanisms to help resettle these refugees would need to be discussed, but their ultimate destination would not be Israel.

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

6

It is now seven years since 9/11. Are you committed to continue the war on terrorism? What would your administration do to hunt down the top Al-Qaeda leadership?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

The first responsibility of the President of the United States is to protect the security of the American people. Al Qaeda and like-minded extremist organizations are as determined as ever to strike the United States. To stop their efforts to do America harm, we must use every tool we have. As President, I will reinforce our military effort in Afghanistan, which is the forgotten frontline in the war on terror. The Taliban cannot be allowed to regain power in Afghanistan; if they return, al Qaeda will return with them. Current U.S. policies have actually weakened the Afghan government and allowed the Taliban to retake many areas, especially in the south. Terrorists are increasingly finding safe havens in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, and they are expanding into urban areas of Pakistan as well, contributing to the crisis there. First, as president, I will call on our NATO allies and expect them to respond, along with other nations, to increase the international forces in Afghanistan. Second, we will gather greater international support for reconstruction and will finally put into place an effective plan to stem the drug trade. Third, we'll take new steps to improve Afghanistan's capacity for self-governance, encouraging the international community to invest in education, transportation, roads, water systems, and security, sending people with expertise to jumpstart these efforts. As President, I will also appoint a special envoy to forge much more effective cooperation to resolve the problems along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.



In Afghanistan, Pakistan, and around the rest of the world, combating terrorism will require better intelligence and a clandestine service that is gathering intelligence on the street. As President, I will work to restore morale in our intelligence community, increase the number of agents and analysts proficient in Arabic and other key languages, and raise the profile and status of intelligence analysis.

To maximize our effectiveness, we have to rebuild our alliances. Most of the terrorists apprehended for plotting attacks against the United States, both before and after 9/11, were arrested in other countries as a result of cooperation between intelligence and law enforcement agencies. The problem we face is global; we must therefore be attentive to the values, concerns, and interests of our allies and partners. That also means doing a better job of building counterterrorist capacity around the world. We must help [\(continued on following page\)](#)

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Defeating radical Islamist extremists is the transcendent national security challenge of our time. At home, my administration will be fully prepared to deter, detect, and respond to any attack. But we must stay on offense. The 9/11 attack highlighted a failure to adequately respond to a hostile global terror network. Before 9/11, al Qaeda was basically free to plan, train, and conduct attacks from Afghanistan—despite bombing US embassies and attacking the USS Cole. As president, I will not allow such terrorist sanctuary. We must never again assume that the activities of extremists overseas do not impact our own security at home, which is why we must succeed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Hunting down bin Laden and his terror lieutenants would deal a severe blow to al Qaeda, which is why I will employ an array of measures against them, including robust U.S. special operations, stepped up training of elite Pakistani units, the aggressive exploitation of bin Laden's communication network, and other actions.



But prevailing in this struggle will require more than military power. I would also employ every tool possible to help moderate Muslims resist the well-financed campaign of extremism that is tearing their societies apart. This is a war of ideas where non-military tools will be even more important than military tools over the long-term, where scholarships will be more important than smart bombs. We need to promote political openness so there are options other than radicalism to express discontent and we need to promote economic development so there are educational and employment opportunities beyond the madrassas and the jihadists.

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

The war in Iraq has emboldened al Qaeda, whose recruitment has jumped and whose leadership enjoys a safe-haven in Pakistan, a thousand miles from Iraq. The central front in the war against terror is not Iraq, and it never was. Rather than fight a war that does not need to be fought, we need to start fighting the battles that need to be won on the central front of the war against al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This is the area where the 9/11 attacks were planned. This is where Osama bin Laden and his top lieutenants still hide. This is where extremism poses its greatest threat. Yet in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, we have pursued flawed strategies that are too distant from the needs of the people, and too timid in pursuit of our common enemies.



We still have the wrong strategy. Drawing down our troop presence is the best way to finally apply real pressure on the Iraqi government to make the political accommodations necessary to end the civil war. I will immediately give my military commanders a new mission in Iraq: ending the war. I will immediately begin to remove our combat brigades from Iraq at a pace of 1 to 2 brigades a month, and have all of our combat brigades out of Iraq within 16 months. During our drawdown, I will launch aggressive initiatives to press for reconciliation within Iraq, to achieve a new regional compact on stability in Iraq and the Middle East, and to address Iraq's humanitarian crisis.

We cannot prevail in Afghanistan until we reduce our commitment in Iraq, which will allow us to do what I called for last August, providing at least two additional combat brigades to support our efforts in Afghanistan. This increased commitment in turn can be used to leverage greater assistance, with fewer restrictions, from our NATO allies. It will also allow us to invest more in training Afghan security forces, including more joint NATO operations with the Afghan Army, and a national police training plan that is effectively coordinated and resourced. A stepped up military commitment must be backed by a long-term investment in the Afghan people. We will start with an additional \$1 billion in non military assistance each year - aid that is focused on reaching ordinary Afghans by supporting education, basic infrastructure and human services.

To succeed in Afghanistan, we also need to fundamentally rethink our Pakistan policy. For years, we have supported stability over democracy in Pakistan, and gotten neither. [\(continued on following page\)](#)



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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

6

It is now seven years since 9/11. Are you committed to continue the war on terrorism? What would your administration do to hunt down the top Al-Qaeda leadership? (continued from previous page)

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

(continued from previous page) strengthen police, prosecutorial, and judicial systems abroad; improve intelligence; and implement more stringent border controls, especially in developing countries. Instability and extremism fester in places where infrastructure, education, and opportunity are also lacking. I've introduced the Education for All Act to provide \$10 billion over five years toward the goal of basic education for every boy and girl around the world. From Pakistan to Sudan, parents want their children to have an education, but too often governments fail in delivering that basic service or find themselves without the resources to do so even if they are willing. Education is a tool to combat HIV/AIDS, empower women, and certainly for economic development. And I believe all of that plays to our strengths.

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

(continued from previous page) The core leadership of al Qaeda has a safe-haven in Pakistan. The Taliban are able to strike inside Afghanistan and then return to the mountains of the Pakistani border. Throughout Pakistan, domestic unrest has been rising. The full democratic aspirations of the Pakistani people have been too long denied. A child growing up in Pakistan, more often than not, is taught to see America as a source of hate, not hope.

This is why I stood up last summer and said we cannot base our entire Pakistan policy on President Musharraf. Pakistan is our ally, but we do our own security and our ally no favors by supporting its President while we are seen to be ignoring the interests of the people. Our counter-terrorism assistance must be conditioned on Pakistani action to root out the al Qaeda sanctuary. And any U.S. aid not directly needed for the fight against al Qaeda or to invest in the Pakistani people should be conditioned on the full restoration of Pakistan's democracy and rule of law.

Finally, we cannot tolerate a sanctuary for terrorists who threaten America's homeland and Pakistan's stability. If we have actionable intelligence about high-level al Qaeda targets in Pakistan's border region, we must act if Pakistan will not or cannot. Senator Clinton, Senator McCain, and President Bush have all distorted and derided this position, suggesting that I would invade or bomb Pakistan. This is politics, pure and simple. My position, in fact, is the same pragmatic policy that all three of them have belatedly, if tacitly, acknowledged is one we should pursue. Indeed, it was months after I called for this policy that a top al Qaeda leader was taken out in Pakistan by an American aircraft. And remember that the same three individuals who now criticize me for supporting a targeted strike on the terrorists who carried out the 9/11 attacks, are the same three individuals that supported an invasion of Iraq, a country that had nothing to do with 9/11. It is precisely this kind of political point-scoring that has opened up the security gap in this country. We have a security gap when candidates say they will follow Osama bin Laden to the gates of hell, but refuse to follow him where he actually goes. What we need in our next Commander in Chief is not a stubborn refusal to acknowledge reality or empty rhetoric about 3AM phone calls. What we need is a pragmatic strategy that focuses on fighting our real enemies, rebuilding alliances, and renewing our engagement with the world's people.



SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER 2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

7

Tragically, the threat of genocide remains a fact of life in 2008. As President of the United States, would you ever consider sending American troops to Darfur or other areas suffering humanitarian crises?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

As President, I will bring the international community together through American leadership to stop the genocide in Darfur. I have been speaking out since 2004, calling on NATO, the UN Security Council, and the African Union to take strong action to stop the genocide in Darfur.



We must increase our efforts to work strenuously to push Sudan to permit the full deployment of the AU-UN peacekeeping force authorized by the U.N. Security Council, and also work with the region and major African nations to ensure that the A.U.-U.N. [A.U.= African Union] force has the resources necessary to be successful. The United States must intensify pressure on China to use its leverage to secure Khartoum's full cooperation. Washington must also play a greater and more consistent diplomatic role in supporting a political process to bring about peace on the ground. Finally, the United States must be prepared to implement meaningful measures, including imposition of multilateral sanctions and a no-fly zone if the Khartoum government does not permit the A.U.-U.N. force to carry out its mission.

I firmly believe that the United States, like all nations who stand for freedom and respect for human rights, has the moral responsibility to condemn, in the strongest manner possible, the actions of the Sudanese government against its own people. When I am President, the United States will maintain high-level, consistent, and sustained involvement in Darfur until the violence has stopped and the conflict has been resolved.

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

I do not believe it is appropriate to take U.S. options off the table preemptively. I also believe that when we say, "Never Again," we must mean it. In the 1990s, the international community acted much too late to end the Milosevic-inspired slaughter in the Balkans and did not act at all to end the genocide in Rwanda. In Darfur today, more effective international action has been forestalled in the UN by the People's Republic of China. Protecting the murderous Khartoum regime from the consequences of its genocidal actions is not the way for China to demonstrate to the world that it is interested in becoming a responsible stakeholder in the international system. There is also more that can be done outside the UN, including with our NATO allies in establishing a no-fly zone, and with our EU allies in imposing severe financial sanctions on the Khartoum regime.



SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

There is a real mismatch between the urgency of the genocide in Darfur, where innocent civilians are dying every day, and an international response that won't be providing any additional protection until many months down the road.

The United States needs to lead the world in ending this genocide, including by imposing much tougher sanctions that target Sudan's oil revenue, implementing and helping to enforce a no-fly zone, and engaging in more intense, effective diplomacy to get a political roadmap to peace. Rather than pressure the perpetrators of genocide to stop the killing, for four years we have been negotiating compromise after feckless compromise with the Khartoum regime, while it continues its campaign of atrocities.

To stop the genocide, the international community needs to deploy a large, capable force with a robust enforcement mandate to protect civilians. This force should be commanded, funded, mandated and staffed by the UN. This force is needed now, not at some point next year, and it needs to be free from restrictions and obstacles thrown up by the Government of Sudan. I await concrete evidence that the Sudanese government is finally prepared to halt atrocities, re-engage in a peace process, and allow an unfettered peacekeeping mission to do its work.

Although the Sudanese government has accepted a UN-AU hybrid peacekeeping force, the government typically fails to fulfill its commitments. True to form, since accepting the hybrid force, Khartoum has continued to bombard civilian targets, obstruct non-African participants in the hybrid force and expel foreign diplomats. The U.S. needs urgently to change the calculus in Khartoum and stop the genocide. Therefore, the Administration should immediately implement the oil sanctions it threatened last year and still failed to impose last May. I worked with Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS) on the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act, a version of which was signed into law, to impose targeted sanctions on the leading perpetrators of the genocide.

With our allies and our partners in Africa, we need to take immediate steps - economic and military - to let Khartoum know we will not tolerate continued genocide. These steps should include more effective sanctions by the U.S., the EU and the UNSC. We also need to establish a no-fly zone to protect [\(continued on following page\)](#)





SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER
2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

7

Tragically, the threat of genocide remains a fact of life in 2008. As President of the United States, would you ever consider sending American troops to Darfur or other areas suffering humanitarian crises?
(continued from previous page)

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

(continued from previous page) civilians and increase pressure on Khartoum to halt the killing and consent to the robust international force.

In addition to taking immediate steps to protect civilians and end the genocide, the U.S. should step up its diplomatic efforts to negotiate a lasting peace among the Darfur rebel groups and the Sudanese Government.



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2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

DOMESTIC ISSUES

8

Racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and homophobia, fuelled in part by religious demagoguery and manipulation of the Internet, are a reality both here and abroad. What specific steps would your administration take to combat this rising scourge?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

I believe that we all have a responsibility to confront racial injustice and intolerance. When I am President, I will make a strong commitment to fully enforcing our anti-discrimination laws. I will ensure that our laws and our policies reflect that commitment by combating racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and homophobia.



My administration will restore the historic role of the Department of Justice and return the civil rights division to its original mission as a body that vigorously enforces people's civil rights, instead of ignoring them. I have put forth an agenda to fight discrimination that includes increasing funding for the civil rights division by \$30 million; restoring professionalism and removing politics from hiring, case deliberations, and policy decisions within the Department of Justice; and combating ongoing racial and sex discrimination in the labor market by improving laws and expanding enforcement. I will also appoint an attorney general who cares about the rule of law and Supreme Court Justices who understand and respect our Constitution's civil rights guarantees. And I will commit to promoting diversity in our public institutions and our private businesses. I will set an example by ensuring that my administration recruits the best and the brightest of all backgrounds and walks of life. My administration will be as diverse as is our great country.

I will sign the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) into law. Throughout my Senate career, I have been an original co-sponsor of ENDA. It is inconceivable to me that people who work hard and do a good job every day can still be fired because of who they love. It's unfair, it's un-American, and I will put a stop to it. I was proud to help champion the New York state version – called the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act – which was signed into law in late 2002, and I look forward to addressing this important issue at the federal level. I will also sign into law the Matthew Shepard Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which I co-sponsored. I believe that hate crimes undermine the fundamental principle upon which our nation was founded, that all men and women are equal. And I will end the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy. Courage, honor, patriotism and sacrifice – the traits that define our men and women in uniform – have nothing to do with sexual orientation, and I am concerned that the military is discharging people with critical skills.

I believe it is vital to the health and [\(continued on following page\)](#)

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

I believe that a free exchange of ideas and open dialogue contributes to the essential vitality of our democracy, for which so many have fought and died. But those who would exploit these ideals to serve the causes of hatred and extremism offend the traditions of freedom we cherish. I oppose discrimination of any kind and have a long record of fighting to ensure that every American has an equal voice in the political process. I am pleased by the recent advances in technology, which have had an undeniable impact on politics, campaigns and governance more generally. The Internet, for example, serves as a powerful tool, enfranchising and empowering new voices, particularly among those who struggle to be heard in the political arena. However, the promise that the Internet holds must be balanced by forbearance at the potential for its abuse. Consistent with our laws, intelligence agencies and law enforcement must closely monitor the use of the Internet by those who would use it to incite violence and take appropriate action to combat such activities. Furthermore, we must always exercise our freedom of speech at home and use our bully pulpit to denounce forcefully those who use the Internet to spew extremist rhetoric.



SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

Throughout my career, I've spoken out against intolerance and hatred, and have worked to bring people together. In recent months, my campaign has addressed these topics directly. I had the honor of delivering a speech on Martin Luther King Day from the pulpit of Dr. King's church, Ebenezer Baptist in Atlanta. During that speech, I called on the congregation to be honest about our own failings in living up to Dr. King's Dream and creating a united America:



And yet, if we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that none of our hands are entirely clean. If we're honest with ourselves, we'll acknowledge that our own community has not always been true to King's vision of a beloved community. We have scorned our gay brothers and sisters instead of embracing them. The scourge of anti-Semitism has, at times, revealed itself in our community. For too long, some of us have seen immigrants as competitors for jobs instead of companions in the fight for opportunity.

http://www.barackobama.com/2008/01/20/remarks_of_senator_barack_obam_40.php

And recently, I gave a major address on race and American life (http://www.barackobama.com/2008/03/18/remarks_of_senator_barack_obam_53.php), partly to respond to and condemn offensive, incendiary, and divisive remarks by my former pastor that denigrated the goodness and greatness of our country, but also to give broader context to some of the racial divisions that persist. But I also gave that address to open up a wide and honest dialogue about racial tensions and to challenge those listening to not let this overdue conversation be reduced to soundbites and distract us from uniting around a common purpose.

We've made considerable progress on healing many of these tensions in our society; but it is undeniable that we have more work to do. I do not believe that a single speech or a political campaign is the answer to racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, xenophobia and all of the other divisions that plague our society. But I do believe that until we address these issues in a manner that is open, honest, respectful, and thoughtful, they will persist. As president, I will be fully committed to continuing the dialogue that we've tried to start in this campaign. And I will pursue policies that further seek to eradicate discrimination from our society; that [\(continued on following page\)](#)



SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER 2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

DOMESTIC ISSUES

8

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(continued from previous page)

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

(continued from previous page) future of our democracy that our government protects and promotes the rights of all citizens equally. For more than 35 years, I have been an advocate for Americans of all backgrounds, cultures, faiths, and beliefs. In the Senate, I have taken a leading role in spearheading initiatives to expand the circle of opportunity and break down prejudices. As President, I will build on these past efforts. I will promote equality for all through the policies I champion, the appointments I make, the justices I nominate, and my own words and actions.

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

(continued from previous page) work toward closing the stubborn achievement, wealth, and health care gaps; and that will help create a society that is more equal and free, both domestically and abroad.



SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER 2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

DOMESTIC ISSUES

9

Historically, the United States has always been the strongest economic power in the world. But today, the dollar is at the lowest we've seen in decades. What new ideas would you bring to the table to reverse this troubling trend?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

I will start by addressing the trade deficit, which has doubled since President Bush came into office. The ballooning deficit means that we are increasingly consuming more than we produce. It also means that we are gradually ceding our economic sovereignty to other nations. Goods that potentially could be produced here at home are being bought from abroad. And money that could be invested to generate jobs in America is being sent abroad. This is already coming back to haunt us. Countries like China – nations with which we have massive trade deficits – have accumulated hundreds of billions of dollars and are setting up government-controlled investment funds that are going to acquire American stocks, real estate, and companies. I have called on the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to craft guidelines for making these investment vehicles more transparent. In addressing the deficit, we also urgently need to boost the national savings rate. Companies need incentives to invest more in plant and equipment; families need policies that help to save; and the government has to return to fiscal discipline. As President, I will close loopholes that reward American companies when they move jobs abroad, will help families save for retirement through generous matching tax cuts, and move us back toward balanced budgets.



As President, I will tackle our economic problems before they become crises. Take, for example, the challenges Americans face today. I was the first candidate to acknowledge that our economy is slipping into a recession and to propose immediate measures to help working families. I have proposed an economic stimulus plan that would establish a \$30 billion Emergency Housing Crisis Fund to assist states and cities mitigate the effects of mounting foreclosures; establish a 90-day moratorium on subprime foreclosures and an automatic rate freeze on subprime mortgages of at least five years; and provide \$25 billion in emergency energy assistance for families facing skyrocketing heating bills. I will also make immediate investments in energy efficiency and alternative energy to jumpstart “green collar” job growth, and I will extend and broaden unemployment insurance to help those who have lost their jobs and are struggling to find work.

I also have a plan to make investments in innovation that will create the jobs of the future, stimulate economic growth, and ensure American leadership in new industries. I will work (continued on following

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

Our economy has been the freest, most dynamic, and prosperous in the world, and I intend to keep it so. We have entered the twenty-first century with the strongest economy in the world, and we must remain committed to pursuing the pro-growth policies that have propelled America's emergence as the world's brightest beacon of prosperity. Fulfilling the promise of American prosperity in a global economy rests on our ability to provide a pro-growth, job-creating environment for working men and women, for innovators and entrepreneurs, and for our children on whom our nation will soon depend. A pro-growth economic policy that benefits all Americans must recognize that it is the private sector – the entrepreneurs, the innovators, and all other hard-working Americans – which creates jobs and grows the economy. I believe Washington can best assist America's future by keeping taxes low and expanding global trade for American products to ensure our nation's enduring prosperity. These steps would enhance the confidence of global markets in the fundamental U.S. outlook, a viewpoint likely to be reflected in a stronger currency value. Almost certainly, the steady, misguided drumbeat of calls for higher taxes; greater government spending; more burdensome regulation of health care and other markets; and increased economic isolation has weighed upon the dollar.



SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

The financial fallout from the mortgage crisis has spilled into the larger economy with millions of Americans now worried about their jobs, their homes and their financial futures. At this moment, we must come together and act to address the housing crisis, restore balance, fairness and confidence in our economy, and provide some relief to America's middle class families that are getting squeezed from all sides.

Six months ago, I announced my plan to put a middle-class tax cut worth \$500 per person or \$1000 per family into the pockets of workers who deserve it. I also proposed eliminating income taxes for seniors making under \$50,000 and creating a universal mortgage credit for homeowners who do not itemize, which will provide an average of \$500 to 10 million homeowners.

And because this kind of relief can't wait until the next President takes office, I proposed a plan in January to provide an immediate tax cut of \$250 for workers and their families and a temporary \$250 bonus to seniors in their Social Security checks. These tax cuts will help to stimulate the economy by immediately putting money into the pockets of working Americans who need it and will spend it. And if the economy continued to worsen, I called for an additional \$250 to workers and seniors to help them get by.

To address the housing crisis, I have worked with Senator Chris Dodd to introduce legislation that would convert risky mortgages to stable, fixed 30-year mortgages that helps families avoid foreclosure, reduces potential losses for investors, and injects more credit and confidence into the marketplace. I have also called for a Foreclosure Prevention Fund to provide resources to innocent homeowners, and a 10 percent universal mortgage tax credit. And we should provide aid to states that have been hardest-hit by the housing crisis so that they don't have to slash essential services like health care or infrastructure, and extending unemployment insurance for those Americans who find themselves out of work.

Part of the reason the housing crisis has caused so much harm is that Americans are already living on the edge. In order to prevent the kinds of deceptive practices that led to today's mortgage crisis and to prevent credit cards from becoming the next subprime crisis, I will create a system that's open and transparent and establish a five-star credit card rating system. And I will (continued on following page)





SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER 2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

DOMESTIC ISSUES

9

Historically, the United States has always been the strongest economic power in the world. But today, the dollar is at the lowest we've seen in decades. What new ideas would you bring to the table to reverse this troubling trend?

(continued from previous page)

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

(continued from previous page) restore our role as the world's innovation superpower. As President, I will invest in clean energy, which will create millions of new "green-collar" jobs, and I will double investments in basic and applied research. I will implement a national strategy to bring broadband to every part of our country. And I will strengthen education from pre-K to post-graduate study – including improving math and science education, recruiting more women and minorities to the science and engineering fields, and tripling the number of National Science Foundation fellowships – and restore integrity to science policy by ending the Bush administration's war on science.

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

(continued from previous page) institute a Credit Card Bill of Rights that bans unilateral changes to credit card agreements, applies interest rates increases only to future debts, and prohibits interest on transaction fees.

In addition to this immediate relief, we need a long-term strategy to grow our economy and make it work for every American. That's why I have proposed a plan that would keep us competitive by providing every American with a world-class education from birth to college and to invest in the industries of the future, like renewable energy and technology, because we need to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation to keep us strong and competitive in a 21st century economy.



SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER 2008 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

DOMESTIC ISSUES

10

How would your administration deal with the immigration issue?

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON

I will work to enact comprehensive immigration reform that respects the rule of law, our immigrant heritage, and our values. I support reform that toughens security at our borders, holds accountable employers who hire undocumented workers, and helps local communities deal with the consequences of a broken immigration system. I am also going to help our neighbors to the south provide opportunities for their own people. And I will ensure that we give people who are willing to work hard, play by the rules, learn English, and pay fines a path to earned legalization.



SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

As the recent immigration debate demonstrated, Americans have little trust that their government will honor a pledge to do the things necessary to make our border secure. As president, I will honor that pledge by securing the border, thus strengthening our national security. I will also require that, among other things, border-state governors certify that the border is secure before proceeding to other reform measures. However, I also believe that our immigration system must recognize that America will always be that "shining city upon a hill," a beacon of hope and opportunity for those seeking a better life built on hard work and optimism. Once we achieve border security, we must ensure that we approach our remaining immigration challenges with constructive dialogue and solutions that reflect a compassionate approach and the needs of our economy.



SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

I am committed to fighting for comprehensive immigration reform during my first term as president. As president, I will put comprehensive immigration reform back on the nation's agenda, and I will not rest until it is passed once and for all. We are a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. We need comprehensive immigration reform that creates a system that is fair, consistent, compassionate, and emphasizes both maintaining the rule of law and the security of our borders while working to keep families together and putting the undocumented on an earned path to citizenship.



Family immigration should remain the foundation of our system. In the most recent immigration debate on the U.S. Senate floor, I fought to improve and pass amendments to put greater emphasis on keeping immigrant families together and to revisit a controversial new points system that never received a proper public hearing. On security, comprehensive reform has to mean gaining operational control of our borders by using better technology, improving infrastructure, and making smart choices about where we deploy resources on the Southern and Northern borders. These actions can strengthen our security while discouraging people from taking the risk of crossing the border and a dangerous desert illegally. And at the workplace, we need a simple, but mandatory electronic system that enables employers to verify the legal status of the people they hire.

We also need to bring the 12 million undocumented immigrants out of the shadows. We need to be realistic about the fact that they are here, we can't deport them, and they have become an integral part of our society. We need to give this population a chance to pay a fine, to have provisional status in the country, and to get into the back of the line for citizenship.

If President Bush cannot lead on this issue, I will. I am one of the few to have marched in the immigration marches last year. I have a proven record of working on this issue and have been a leader in the U.S. Senate during the last debates on comprehensive immigration reform. Along with Congressman Gutierrez, I wrote and introduced the Citizenship Promotion Act, which among other things would make the fees charged to apply for citizenship more affordable and authorize new funds for community based organization to provide English and civics training for immigrants.