Good evening. It is my distinct honor to be here to commemorate the signing of the historic Abraham Accords. This landmark agreement between the United Arab Emirates and Israel, and Israel and the Kingdom of Bahrain marks the first step in over twenty-five years towards a more peaceful, secure, and prosperous Middle East. I am honored to represent President Trump at this momentous occasion.

The Peace Treaties are named the Abraham Accords for the important place the Abraham played in the history of Judaism, Christianity, and the Islam religions. Abraham (flourished early 2nd millennium BCE), the first of the patriarchs and a figure revered by the three great monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. According to the biblical book of Genesis, Abraham left Ur, in Mesopotamia, because God called him to found a new nation. In Judaism the promised offspring is understood to be the Jewish people descended from Abraham’s son, Isaac, born of his wife Sarah. Similarly, in Christianity the genealogy of Jesus is traced to Isaac, and Abraham’s near-sacrifice of Isaac is seen as a foreshadowing of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. In Islam it is Ishmael, Abraham’s firstborn son, born of Hagar, who is viewed as the fulfillment of God’s promise, and the Prophet Muhammad is his descendant.

The fact that we are all here together in Abu Dhabi demonstrates the importance of this occasion. I’d like to offer our thanks to His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, His Highness Sheikh Tahnoun Bin Zayed, His Highness Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed, Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al-Qasimi, Minister Al-Tayer, Minister Al-Jaber, H.E. Khaldoun Al-Mubarak, Chairman Mohamed Khalifa Al-Mubarak, Minister Al-Kaabi and all of the Emiratis for their gracious hospitality.

Acknowledgments

Before I speak further about the importance of this agreement, I’d like to acknowledge everyone who has helped make this historic moment a reality.
First, I'd like to thank Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for taking the extraordinary step for the betterment of their nations, the region, and the world. Because of their courageous leadership, I firmly believe more Middle Eastern nations will follow your lead and sign onto this agreement, as Bahrain has already done and as other countries have expressed interest in doing.

Second, I'd like to thank President Trump for his bold leadership and for making the strategic decision to focus on what brings these two nations together, as opposed to what has historically driven them apart.

Also from the United States, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Senior Advisor to the President Jared Kushner, and National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien, who have all played a crucial role in achieving this agreement. I would also like to thank members of the U.S. delegation with us tonight: Ambassador Rikolta, Avi Berkowitz, Adam Boehler, Robert Greenway, and Major General Correa.

**Historical Context**

Advancing peace in the Middle East is something that many world leaders have talked about, but few have taken action to produce meaningful results.

The first step toward peace in the region came in September 1978 with the signing of the Camp David Accords signed by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. This was followed with the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty signed in 1979. The Treaty made significant strides to enhance the security of both nations by ending decades of war, demilitarizing the Sinai Peninsula, and allowing Israeli ships to freely pass through the Suez Canal, among other steps to normalize relations. It also historically made Egypt the first Arab nation to officially recognize the state of Israel.

This treaty was made in part thanks to President Carter’s leadership. Following his election to office, he reinvigorated the peace process and persisted through 14 months of diplomatic negotiations. These negotiations culminated after twelve days of secret meetings at Camp David.

We would not reach another significant milestone towards peace for another 15 years, with the signing of the Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty in 1994.

The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty began with the signing of the Washington Declaration in Washington, DC and was presided over by President Clinton. The Declaration ended a long and tragic war. In his speech marking the historic occasion, President Clinton acknowledged
the courage of the Jordanian leader, King Hussein. The leaders then, put aside their
differences and compromised to reach agreements that have been central to enhancing
peace and security throughout the region. The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty settled relations
between the two countries, adjusted water and land disputes, border crossings, passports,
and other importance matters.

**Abraham Accords**

The Abraham Accords signed by the UAE and Israel built and improved upon these
agreements by transforming the regional security environment, as well as driving economic
prosperity for all nations involved.

With no movement towards peace in more than 25 years, President Trump recognized a new
approach was needed, took action, and decided to focus negotiations on the parties’ mutual
desire to create opportunity, inspire innovation, and increase prosperity for their people. This
focus on improving economic relations created a historic breakthrough that will reshape the
Middle East for decades to come.

Recognizing this strategic opportunity for change and improvement, His Highness Sheikh
Mohamed bin Zayed and Prime Minister Netanyahu made the bold and courageous decision
to focus on their shared interests and choose a better future for their citizens.

With the signing of the Abraham Accords, the UAE and Israel have started a new chapter in
their nations’ history. They have committed to opening embassies and appointing
ambassadors, which will significantly help further their strategic relationship by increasing
dialogue and cooperation. They have also begun meeting to establish bilateral agreements
on investment, tourism, telecommunications, technology, energy, healthcare, and other
areas of mutual interest.

While much has been deservedly written on the diplomatic and geo-political importance of
the United Arab Emirates and Israel signing the Abraham Accords, I’d like to focus on what is
conceivably more important for the people of Israel and the Gulf – the economic
opportunities and the security improvements that can be created from these new
partnerships.

**Economic Opportunities**

The Abraham Accords establish direct economic ties between two of the Middle East’s most
thriving and advanced economies. These ties create a tremendous foundation for economic
growth, and it is now our job to turn the Accords’ vision for growth and opportunity into actual innovation and prosperity.

Israel and UAE each have close to the same population at 9-10 Million people and similar size economies at approximately 400 Billion GDP. Yet the constructs of the economies are different and now they are now unleashed to grow faster together through shared investment and trade. Together, Emirati and Israeli businesses, along with their U.S. partners, can restore the commercial bonds that flourished centuries ago. Israelis, with their world-class technology and innovation, can help their Emirati counterparts diversify their economy, better manage scarce water resources and launch innovative new IT platforms. Emirati expertise in ports and logistics, energy, and world-class tourism can likewise bring new growth opportunities to Israel.

Israel and the UAE also have the financial ability and expertise together to take advantage of opportunities elsewhere in the world. This will demonstrate not only the value of this partnership, but also the values that the UAE and Israel share. While many choose to focus on the existing differences and challenges, Emirati and Israeli citizens share many interests, and your businesses and people are now primed to join forces to create more wealth, solve more problems, and develop next-generation innovations that benefit both your countries and the world. An immediate example of this was the decision to cooperate on the treatment of and development of a vaccine for the coronavirus, which has the potential to save millions of lives throughout the region. I am confident that additional areas for cooperation and partnership will be identified, and the United States is eager to work with you both.

**Security Benefits**

With greater economic prosperity comes stronger security. Along with the United States, Israel and the UAE share a similar outlook regarding the threats and opportunities in the region, as well as a shared commitment to promoting stability through diplomatic engagement, increased economic integration, and closer security coordination. Today’s agreement will lead to better lives for the peoples of the United Arab Emirates, Israel, and the region.

Together, the UAE and Israel will stand better prepared to confront malign threats from the Iranian regime, their proxies, and other extremist groups. The United States has long supported both Israel and the UAE in their defense in the region, and with this agreement, we can all stand united against the Iranian regime’s malign influence.
Emiratis and Israelis can deploy the technology and expertise to stop bad actors intent on stealing secrets, funding terrorist attacks, or attacking the infrastructure and systems that are critical to the health of our economies. This historic partnership will make both the Gulf and the Levant stronger and safer. On this foundation, Emiratis and Israelis will both prosper, leaving their citizens a safer and better world.

**Conclusion**

The discussions we have had today and in the coming weeks and months will bear witness to how well we take advantage of this unique and historic opportunity. I encourage you to find the common and shared values and to build the economic relationships that will shape your nations for generations to come.

Other Middle Eastern nations will see the extraordinary benefits of this agreement and join you and Bahrain, on your journey to more peaceful, secure and prosperous futures. The Abraham Accords is only the first critical step in President Trump’s vision for finding comprehensive stability in the region.

There is a story in the Bible of Bezalel. He was chosen by Moses to be the Chief Artisan of the Tabernacle which was which was considered a very important job as it was the Tent of the Congregation. Moses had been instructed at Mount Sinai to have it built. Bezazel was chosen by Moses as he was known as a highly gifted workman, showing great skill and originality. He was also known to have both Wisdom (Chochma) and Heart (Lev). His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and Prime Minister Netanyahu through their bold and courageous leadership have shown wisdom and heart.

I thank you for the tremendous opportunity to be part of this historic occasion and for the opportunity to speak tonight. I am eager to continue to working with the UAE and Israel to find ways to grow this newfound economic relationship. These remarks have been revised post-delivery to include reference to the 1994 peace agreement between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, forged between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein.

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