

# Romney's Middle East agenda: Iran, Syria, Arab Spring, and the Jihadists

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Mitt Romney introduced his Presidential Foreign Policy Speech at the Citadel on October 7, 2011 in Charleston, South Carolina.

To View the entire Foreign Policy White Paper Please See: <http://mi.tt/rlfG42>

In his agenda for Foreign Policy announced today Governor Mitt Romney underlined the threats coming out of the Middle East: Iran's regime, the Syrian regime and the Jihadists who are attempting to dominate the Arab Spring

The following are excerpts of his speech "ONLY" relative to the Middle East:

## The Threatening Trends Facing America

America faces a bewildering array of threats and opportunities.

**Radical Islamic Jihadism:** Radical Islam poses a multifaceted challenge. It poses a direct terror threat to our homeland and to our allies. Jihadists seek to exploit fragile states across the world as safe havens from which to plan and launch attacks or to tip those nations into theocratic revolutions. In a world in which weapons of mass destruction can fall into the wrong hands, the United States faces a set of national security dilemmas that are as urgent as they are complex.

## Mitt Romney's Strategy

### Middle East / Arab Spring

The Greater Middle East is experiencing the most dramatic change since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The protests that have broken out across the Arab world bespeak a generational yearning for a better life and for human dignity and present an opportunity for profoundly positive change. But the ongoing revolution is double-edged. Iran and Islamist extremists are seeking to influence events and expand their control. The future of democratic institutions in the region hangs in the balance. To protect our enduring national interests and to promote our ideals, a Romney administration will pursue a strategy of supporting groups and governments across the Middle East to advance the values of representative government, economic opportunity, and human rights and opposing any extension of Iranian or jihadist influence. In his first 100 days, Mitt Romney will engage Congress to organize all diplomatic and assistance efforts in the greater Middle East under one Regional Director with unified budgetary and directive authority. One official with responsibility and accountability will set regional priorities and train our soft power on ensuring the Arab Spring realizes its promise.

**Immediate Post-Revolutionary States: Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya:** Nations in transition to new governmental structures are threatened by destabilizing jihadist forces and Iranian backed elements seeking to exploit the upheaval to make political inroads. A Romney administration will support those individuals and groups that are seeking to instill lasting democratic values and build sturdy democratic institutions. Mitt Romney will make available technical assistance to transitional governments to promote democracy, good governance, and sound financial management. He will convene a summit that brings together world leaders, donor groups, and young leaders of civil society groups that espouse these values.

**Syria:** The United States must recognize Syrian strongman Bashar al-Assad for what he is: a vicious dictator, a killer, and a proxy for Iran. Mitt Romney believes the United States should pursue a strategy of isolating and pressuring the regime to increase likelihood of a peaceful transition to a legitimate government. We should redouble our push for the UN Security Council to live up to its responsibilities and impose sanctions. We should work with Saudi Arabia and Turkey to call on Syria's military to protect civilians rather than attack them and increase the possibility that the ruling minority Alawites will be able to reconcile with the majority Sunni population in a post-Assad Syria. And we should make clear that the United States and our allies will support the Syrian opposition when the time comes for them to forge a post-Assad government.

### Iran

Mitt Romney believes that it is unacceptable for Iran to possess a nuclear weapon. Mitt Romney's objective will be to end Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon, eliminate the threat of Iranian nuclear terrorism against the United States and our allies, and prevent nuclear proliferation across the Middle East. He will:

- In his first 100 days, make clear that the military option is on the table by ordering the regular presence of an aircraft carrier task force in both the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf region simultaneously. He will also begin talks with Israel to increase military coordination and assistance and enhance intelligence sharing.
- Increase military coordination with Arab allies in the region and conduct more naval exercises in the region as a demonstration of strength and resolve.
- Implement tougher sanctions. Mitt Romney will focus new sanctions on the financial institutions that underpin the Iranian regime and its Revolutionary Guard Corps and on their commercial activities. He will pursue sanctions on firms that transport such products to and from Iran.
- Step up enforcement of existing U.S. laws that bar commerce with Iran, such as the exportation of refined petroleum products to Iran.
- Increase diplomatic isolation of Iran and work to indict Ahmadinejad for incitement to genocide under the Genocide Convention.
- Support the Iranian opposition by improving the flow of information to the Iranian population about its own government's repressive activities and refusing to stand silent while the Iranian regime ruthlessly terrorizes its own people.
- Commit to the on-time completion of a fully capable missile defense system in Eastern Europe on the current timeline, but retain the option of reverting to President Bush's swifter plan if Iran is making faster progress on developing long range missiles or if new technologies on which the current plan relies fail to materialize in a timely fashion. Mitt Romney will deny Russia any control or veto over the system.

#### Diplomatic & National Security Institutions

#### Train Counterterrorism Resources on Emerging Threats:

Order an initiative to combat the radicalization of U.S. citizens and residents that leads to homegrown terrorism. Mitt Romney will redouble efforts to work with state and local authorities to share intelligence &ldquo;vertically.&rdquo; He will bolster efforts to collect and monitor communications between terrorist networks abroad and people within our borders. He will enhance partnerships with Muslim-American communities to identify threats and suspicious activity, and develop our database of knowledge about the hallmarks of radicalization and recruitment. He will also require that any counterterrorism strategy must contain measures to preserve privacy and our constitutional rights.

#### Setting a New Tone: Eight Actions for the First Hundred Days

##### 3. Enhance Our Deterrent Against Iran

Reaffirm that Iran's possession of a nuclear weapon is unacceptable. Order the regular presence of a carrier task force in both the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf region. Begin discussions with Israel to increase levels of military and intelligence coordination and assistance.

##### 5. Establish a Single Point of Responsibility for All Soft Power Resources in the Middle East

Work with Congress and relevant Executive branch agencies to organize all diplomatic and assistance efforts in the greater Middle East under one Regional Director with unified budgetary and directive authority. One official with responsibility and accountability will set regional priorities and direct our soft power toward ensuring the Arab Spring realizes its promise.

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