

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

Good evening, everyone!

It is a tough job to introduce a man who needs no introduction, as we have seen on the screen – Mortimer Zuckerman.

As you know, Mort has had a Midas touch with everything that he has put his hand to. He is a real estate magnate – having built up the very successful Boston Properties. He is a media tycoon, as owner of U.S. News and World Report, as well as a media celebrity thanks to his regular columns and appearances on television. He is a generous philanthropist. And of course, his greatest claim to fame is that he is the vice-chair of the International Peace Institute, IPI.

As President of IPI, I am in regular contact with top statesmen and diplomats. But I have seldom seen a diplomat as smooth and accomplished as Mort.

As you know, Mort is an impassioned defender of the state of Israel and the Jewish people.

And yet, when I have travelled with Mort across the Arab world, I am always impressed by how much he is loved and respected by those who have exactly the opposite views.

Let me give you a concrete example:

Every year, during the busy high-level General Assembly week in New York, IPI hosts a Middle East dinner. It is only for foreign ministers, mostly from Europe and the Arab countries. The only non-foreign minister who everyone (including Arab representatives) insists should be at the table is Mort. I attribute this not only to his well-respected

knowledge of global developments, and his contacts in the Middle East. But also to the fact that he is a true gentleman who engages with people of all creeds and backgrounds with a dignity, warmth and understanding that endear him to whomever he meets.

Indeed, Mort is not just the man with the golden touch. He is the man with a golden heart. While all of you know Mort's public persona, I am fortunate to know the private Mort. He is a true friend. Despite his busy life, he is always there to give advice in good times and bad. He is a fantastic father. And he has a great way of communicating with children of all ages – like my 13-year-old twins, for whom he is a role model.

Knowing what it is like to have Mort as a friend, I can say with conviction – and I must admit with some emotion – that we can all be grateful that Mort is a friend of the Jewish community, the state of Israel, and the United States of America – and a champion for global peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please give a warm round of applause to a man who is a leader, a friend – and first and foremost, an inspiration to us all – Mr. Mortimer Zuckerman.