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# Students pray for Sharon's recovery

*Israeli prime minister still in coma after suffering massive stroke last week*

BY ASHLEA SURLES, DAILY STAFF REPORTER ON 1/9/06



**Rabbi Jason Miller, associate director of the University's chapter of Hillel, leads a vigil Saturday for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on the Diag. (EUGENE ROBERTSON/Daily)**

Students gathered in a freezing drizzle on the Diag Saturday night to pray in a vigil for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Sharon suffered a significant stroke last week and is currently in a medically induced coma.

The 25 vigil attendees prayed "to inspire the minds and guide the hands of his doctors and caregivers so that

they will lead him back along the path to wholeness and wellbeing."

"This vigil is not in memory of Ariel Sharon, but in hopes of his recovery," said Perry Teicher, chair of the University's chapter of Hillel.

Prayers were also said for acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, for the rest of the Israeli government and for the people of Israel.

Olmert presided over Israel's weekly Cabinet meeting yesterday, leaving the seat Sharon usually occupies empty.

Olmert said that the Israeli government "will continue to do what (Sharon) would want â€" running affairs as they should be," CNN.com reported yesterday.

Some students said they believe Sharon's illness will make Israel's continuing peace process more difficult.

"It's going to be a much more tumultuous time now," said Alana Kuhn, political chair of the American Movement for Israel, a student group.

**Sharon's health is "necessary for the continuum of talks and the move toward peace," said Rabbi Jason Miller, who is associate director of the University's Hillel chapter.**

In contrast with these students' support for Sharon, some world leaders have voiced bitter sentiments toward the Israeli leader in the last week.

"Hopefully, the news that the criminal of Sabra and Chatilla has joined his ancestors is final," Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said, The Associated Press reported last week.

LSA senior Rama Salhi, a member of the pro-Palestinian group, Students Allied for Freedom and Equality, said she thinks Sharon's health crisis won't have a significant impact on the Middle East.

"I don't think that things will change very much because it isn't so much (Sharon's) existence but the existence of his mentality that matters," Salhi said.

Doctors will not know the extent of Sharon's brain damage until the anesthesia is reduced. Doctors plan to reduce medication and awaken Sharon from the medically induced coma today.

**Miller said it was important to bring Jewish students together in prayer and in support for one another.**

"It's a vigil in his honor and memory - not memory, hopefully," Kuhn said. "It serves to bring together the campus community under a united goal."

*- Anne VanderMey contributed to this report.*

