

# White House Aides Discuss Agenda For NATO/G8 Summits

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**CHICAGO (CBS)** – So far, most of the talk about the upcoming G8 and NATO summits in Chicago has been about what may happen on the streets outside the meetings, but on Tuesday, White House officials briefed reporters on other aspects of the summits.

As CBS 2 Chief Correspondent Jay Levine reports, officials said it was President Barack Obama's decision to host the two summits in his hometown of Chicago. That decision was made around the same time Rahm Emanuel, Obama's former chief of staff, was elected mayor.

Several other U.S. cities were considered, but apparently not seriously.

From the briefing provided for reporters on Tuesday, it seemed clear that the fact that those summits are being held in Chicago, is a personal decision for the president.

The briefing was held behind closed doors, on the record, but without cameras. The presentation was made by a deputy assistant and a special assistant to the president. They immediately credited both Emanuel and former Mayor Richard M. Daley with striving to elevate Chicago's image worldwide.

They said the reason Chicago got the summits boiled down to Obama's pride in his hometown and confidence Chicago was capable of hosting the two meetings of international leaders; Chicago's connection to the global economy; and the international presence and diversity of the city itself.

They said that protests at past summits reflect the inevitable [security](#) challenges but they felt Chicago was more than capable of handling them.

Gov. Pat Quinn agreed.

"I think we're going to work together to make sure that we have a welcoming, hospitable environment here in Chicago for this gathering and a safe one," Quinn said at an unrelated event.

The president's aides also revealed more of what will go on inside the meetings, citing major NATO topics as:

- The transition in Afghanistan from U.S. and NATO forces to Afghan security;
- the NATO community's joint defense capability, including missile defense systems;
- and global partnerships with other non-NATO nations, like the Persian Gulf nations that joined in the blockade of Libya during last year's revolution there.

Asked directly who's footing the bill for the summits, the two White House aides said that between the federal [funding](#), the Department of Homeland Security, and money raised in Chicago by the privately-run host committee, they believe the summit can go forward without being a burden on Chicago taxpayers.

While the summits themselves will be held at McCormick Place, organizers also envision the foreign leaders who attend the meetings will criss-cross the city to visit the various ethnic neighborhoods, be they Polish, Lithuanian, Greek, Italian or any other number of ethnicities.

That would mean dozens foreign dignitaries and their security details and motorcades fanning out over the city.