

# PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 14, 2008

Contact: **Josh Block** (202) 997-4614  
**Jennifer Cannata** (202) 639-5229

## **U.S. OFFICIALS, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS SPEAK OUT AGAINST CARTER MEETING**

Disregarding the advice of the State Department, Congress and senior U.S. government officials, Jimmy Carter has announced his intent to travel to Syria for a meeting with Khaled Mashal, head of the Hamas terrorist organization.

As the State Department explained when asked about trip, “U.S. government policy is that Hamas is a terrorist organization and we don't believe it is in the interests of our policy or in the interests of peace to have such a meeting.” And as Secretary Rice herself said, “I find it hard to understand what is going to be gained by having discussions with Hamas about peace when Hamas is, in fact, the impediment to peace.”

Democratic and Republican Congressional leaders have also strongly condemned Carter's meeting with the unrepentant terrorist leader who has denied the Holocaust and is implicated in the murder of innocent American civilians.

AIPAC applauds members of Congress who have demonstrated strong leadership in speaking out against Carter's decision to meet with a terrorist mastermind in contravention of American policy.

“Hamas terrorists are responsible for the murders of at least 26 American citizens—some of them teenagers, children and infants,” write Reps. Mark Kirk (R-IL) and Shelley Berkley (D-NV), along with their colleagues, in a bipartisan letter to Carter asking him not to meet with “the man who ordered their deaths.”

Among those speaking out on the House floor, Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) and Republican Chief Deputy Whip Eric Cantor (R-VA) also called on Carter to cancel the meeting.

“In light of Hamas' continuing violence and calls for the destruction of the State of Israel, I strongly urge President Carter to reconsider his decision,” Wasserman Schultz said.

“As Hamas rockets and mortars continue to rain down on innocent Israelis in Sderot, Jimmy Carter will lend legitimacy to a man whose bottom line is the destruction of the state of Israel,” Cantor explained.

###