

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

March 27, 2003

SUPPORT AN EFFECTIVE AND PRINCIPLED PEACE PROCESS

Dear Colleague,

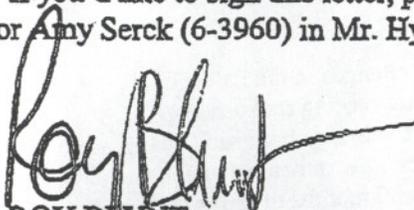
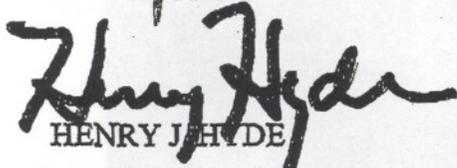
On June 24, 2002, President Bush set out important criteria that must form the basis of any Middle East peace process. These principles are

- above all, Palestinian terror and violence must cease;
- a new Palestinian leadership -- with *real authority* -- needs to be established, free from the taint of terrorism and willing and able to dismantle the terrorist network;
- there needs to be true accountability and transparency in Palestinian governance;
- and the Palestinian security apparatus must be overhauled so that it truly fights terrorism, rather than engages in it.

These principles are now more important than ever, since President Bush recently announced that a "roadmap" towards peace would be given to Israel and the Palestinians as soon as the new Palestinian prime minister is confirmed in office. Together, these four principles form the only sensible basis for moving ahead towards the President's stated goal of genuine peace. Without an end to violence, no peace is possible.

As co-authors of the attached letter to President Bush, we strongly urge you to join us in re-affirming our unshakable commitment to these principles.

If you'd like to sign this letter, please contact Carol Doherty (5-6735) in Mr. Lantos's office or Amy Serck (6-3960) in Mr. Hyde's office.


ROY BLUNT

HENRY J. HYDE

Sincerely,


STENY H. HOYER

TOM LANTOS

(over)

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On the eve of dramatic changes in the Middle East, we share with you the hope that new opportunities will develop in the region - opportunities for a more democratic and peaceful region with fewer direct threats to the United States and our interests. recent political changes in the Palestinian Authority also should provide new opportunities to begin a meaningful negotiating process with Israel.

We applaud your willingness to request significant new assistance for Israel in your supplemental request, which will allow Israel to bear more easily some of the burdens of the current war to disarm and liberate Iraq.

We write to express our support for your efforts to resume peace negotiations based on the clear principles you outlined in your June 24th speech. Those principles should underline and guide any "roadmap" towards peace:

above all, Palestinian terror and violence must cease; a new Palestinian leadership - with real authority - needs to be established, free from the taint of terrorism and willing and able to dismantle the terrorist network;

there needs to be true accountability and transparency in Palestinian governance;

and

the Palestinian security apparatus must be overhauled so that it truly fights terrorism, rather than engages in it.

Only then can the Palestinian people begin to see some of their political aspirations realized and only then can we expect Israel to respond with concrete actions.

Many are urging you to short circuit this process and to focus on timelines in achieving the roadmap's benchmarks. We believe that you will not be dissuaded and will focus instead on real performance. Without a new, empowered Palestinian leadership that is firmly engaged in fighting terror, Israel has no one with whom to negotiate.

The United States has developed a level of credibility and trust with all parties in the region which no other country shares. We are concerned that certain nations or groups, if given a meaningful role in monitoring progress made on the ground, might only lessen the chances of moving forward on a realistic path towards peace.

In summary, Mr. President, we share your belief that real changes in the Palestinian leadership provide the possibility to explore once again opportunities to bring real peace to that troubled region of the world. We support your consistent effort to bring about such changes. Only by holding fast to those principles and working closely with the government of Israel and new leaders in the Palestinian Authority can we hope to end the 30 months of terror that have led to nothing but misery for both Palestinians and Israelis.

Sincerely,