

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 18, 2009

The President
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing out of our shared concern over 60 years of conflict in the Middle East, and a mutual desire to see peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. While the obstacles are formidable, we agree with you that every effort should be made to realize that peace.

Many years of strong, principled US engagement led to historic peace treaties between Israel and both Egypt and Jordan. We believe that achievement of a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians requires adherence to some key principles. These include an understanding that while the United States has an important role to play, the parties themselves are the ones who will need to negotiate and live with whatever agreement is reached. As we work closely with our democratic ally, Israel, we must take into account the risks it will face in any peace agreement. Without a doubt, our two governments will agree on some issues and disagree on others, but the United States friendship with Israel requires that we work closely together as we recommit ourselves to our historic role of a trusted friend and active mediator.

We must also continue to insist on the absolute Palestinian commitment to ending terrorist violence and to building the institutions necessary for a viable Palestinian state living side-by-side, in peace with the Jewish state of Israel. The more capable and responsible Palestinian forces become, the more they demonstrate the ability to govern and to maintain security, the easier it will be for them to reach an accord with Israel. We encourage you to continue programs similar to the promising security assistance and training program led by Lieutenant General Keith Dayton, and hope that you will look for other ways to improve Palestinian security and civilian infrastructure.

Finally, we hope that you will promote far greater involvement and participation by the Arab states both in moving toward normal ties with Israel and in encouraging moderate Palestinian elements. Everyone in the region has a stake in the success of these negotiations and should contribute to a lasting and comprehensive resolution.

We look forward to working closely with you on these critical issues.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Mchutski

Alvin Fisher

Ben Laidi

David Vitty

James Shaker

George V. Kinnovich

Tom Kyla

Wm F. B. I

Joe Neubauer

Bill Nelson

to Benjamin Nelson

Jan Test

Kent Larned

Max Bances

Joe Lick

Jimmy

Carl Lewin

John Barrasso

John Cornyn

Janet K. Haka

Tom Ull

Art Roberts

Barbara By

Jim Johnson

Chuck Grassley

Debbie Stabenow

Mary Landrieu

Amy Klobuchar Dianne Feinstein

Sam Brownback

Chuck Sch

Jim Demming

Mark Udall

Frank R. Lautenberg

Byron Dorgan

Herb Kohl

Robert Menendez

Jay Byrnie

John Cornyn

Mark R. Wines

Kirsten E. Hillibrand

Sally Claubkin

Bob Carey, Jr.

Neil McConnell

Phil Hartung

John McCain

John F. King

Jeffrey A. Mackay

John Eisner

Eric Bayh

Paul Beards

Olympic Snow

Patty Murray

Eric A. Calver

Jim E. Riels

Mike Johnson

Robert W. Burns

J. Thun

~~_____~~

Giff Bond

Mike Crogo

Jim DeMint

Mark Royce

Bowen

Blanche L. Linde

Ron Wyden

Lum Ayden

Susan Collins

Bob F. Bennett

Kay R. Hagan

Maria Cantwell

Lyndie
