



ALERT

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Statements on the U.N. Security Council Settlements Resolution

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Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-NY)

February 17, 2011

I spoke with Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.) by phone a few minutes ago. He was quite displeased with recent events, observing that "the Palestinians think they have the PR wind at their backs. They see the White House as more malleable and are taking advantage." He gave some blunt advice, telling the White House to show some "gumption" in turning back the Palestinian demands. He labels the Palestinians' gambit as an example of "the tail wagging a very flea-bitten dog." ([Washington Post](#))

Rep. Rob Andrews (D-NJ)

February 17, 2011

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on the Administration to stand with Israel and veto the proposed anti-Israel United Nations Security Council resolution. Any compromise in our support for the State of Israel would be detrimental to efforts to bring peace and prosperity to the Middle East. The United States should veto any resolution that endangers our allies in the region and threatens the future of the peace process. We must stand with Israel and veto this resolution in the United Nations Security Council. (*Floor Statement*)

Rep. Shelly Berkley (D-NV)

February 17, 2011

The Arabs are using the UN to distract the world from the real obstacle to peace in the Middle East: the Palestinians. They have done nothing to prepare their people for peace and refuse to come to the negotiating table, even after Israel made historic concessions on settlements. The U.S. must not fall prey to this cynical tactic and allow the Arabs to continue avoiding negotiations. I call on the Obama Administration to veto any resolutions at the UN and instead push the Palestinians back to negotiations, where they belong." ([Washington Post](#))

Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA)

February 17, 2011

“The Palestinians are undermining their own best interests in persistently pushing for a UN Security Council vote condemning Israel. Complicated final-status issues like

settlements can only be resolved directly between the Israelis and Palestinians, not by the glib declarations of international fora. Nor will the Palestinians' "UN strategy" contribute to efforts to establish a Palestinian state, which can emerge only through a negotiated agreement with Israel. In fact, UN resolutions or statements, however momentarily satisfying to the Palestinians, would seriously set back those efforts by demonstrating bad faith and signaling to the Israelis that the Palestinians prefer grandstanding to meaningful engagement.

"I strongly urge the Palestinians, for the sake of peace, to cease their efforts at the UN and return at once to the negotiating table. Should they nevertheless persist, I strongly urge the Administration to veto any UN Security Council resolution critical of Israel and to oppose use of any international forum for anti-Israel purposes. By demonstrating consistency and resolve in support of our ally Israel, the Administration will strengthen US credibility abroad."

Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA)

February 17, 2011

"As we wrote to the President last month, the Palestinian leadership's decision to reject the difficult but vital responsibility of making peace with Israel through direct negotiations, and instead to advocate for anti-Israel measures by the United Nations Security Council is counterproductive and unacceptable. Successive Israeli governments have proven Israel's steadfast commitment to peace and our Secretary of State has noted that the current Israeli government took an 'unprecedented' step in pursuit of peace with its ten-month moratorium on Israeli housing construction in the West Bank. Furthermore, since the beginning of the current Israeli government, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called for direct negotiations with the Palestinians anytime and anywhere, without preconditions.

"Instead of negotiating directly with Israel to achieve a peaceful solution to the conflict, Palestinian leaders continue to seek to circumvent the negotiating process by advocating anti-Israel measures at the U.N. Security Council, U.N. General Assembly, and U.N. Human Rights Council. The U.S. should not condone or reward this behavior by supporting their resolutions. We strongly urge the Administration to veto this resolution and to uphold our longstanding commitment to Israel's security." (*Press Release – Joint Statement with Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD)*)

Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL)

February 17, 2011

"In a body that consistently singles out and criticizes Israel, the United States must stand firm and block any resolution, action, or comment that seeks to delegitimize Israel and, in turn, propagate continued Israel-bashing at the United Nations. This biased and one-sided resolution is totally unacceptable as it ignores the willingness of Prime Minister

Netanyahu and the Israeli government to engage in immediate face to face negotiations with the Palestinians. It is absolutely essential that the United States stand in support of our great ally, Israel, and veto this dangerous resolution that only seeks to isolate and damage Israel.” (*Press Release*)

Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY)

February 17, 2011

Washington, DC--Rep. Eliot L. Engel, a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, today urged the United States to veto the pending resolution condemning Israel in the United Nations Security Council. On February 12, 2011, in response to a question by Rep. Engel in the Foreign Affairs Committee, Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg said, "We do not think the Security Council is the right place to engage on these issues."

Rep. Engel said, "It is absolutely outrageous that the U.N. Security Council will consider a resolution condemning Israel on settlements which is a final status issue. Frankly, I think the Palestinians should be condemned for walking away from peace talks. I strongly urge the Obama Administration to veto this resolution if it comes before the Security Council."

Below is Rep. Engel's exchange with Deputy Secretary Steinberg (Committee on Foreign Affairs, February 10, 2011):

Mr. ENGEL. [W]e have this resolution before the Security Council which condemns Israel for the settlements, and makes it seem that the settlements are the reason why there is no peace, which I think is a bunch of nonsense. I think that if the Palestinians would negotiate with the Israelis then the settlement issue, along with other issues, would be taken care of.

I would hope that if that happens, the administration would strongly and forcefully veto such a resolution as we have in the past. And I believe that the administration so far has not yet unequivocally indicated that it would do so. So I would like to ask you is that a fact, and if it is, I would strongly urge the administration to veto this resolution of the Security Council if it comes up.

Mr. STEINBERG. With respect to the Security Council, we have made very clear we do not think the Security Council is the right place to engage on these issues. I have had some success, at least for the moment, in not having that arise there. We will continue to employ the tools that we have to make sure that that continues to not happen. And we made clear both to the Palestinians and our key partners that there are other venues to discuss these issues, but the most important one of which is the one that you identified, which is the only way that this is going to be resolved is through engagement between the two parties, and that is our clear consistent position.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)

February 17, 2011

A vote at the Security Council on core issues in the Middle East peace process would work against our country's consistent position, which has been that such issues can only be resolved by the two parties negotiating directly with each other.

Attempts to use a venue such as the United Nations, which you know has a long history of hostility toward Israel, to deal with just one issue in the negotiations, will not move the two sides closer to a two-state solution, but rather damage the fragile trust between them. ([Politico](#))

Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD)

February 17, 2011

“As we wrote to the President last month, the Palestinian leadership’s decision to reject the difficult but vital responsibility of making peace with Israel through direct negotiations, and instead to advocate for anti-Israel measures by the United Nations Security Council is counterproductive and unacceptable. Successive Israeli governments have proven Israel’s steadfast commitment to peace and our Secretary of State has noted that the current Israeli government took an ‘unprecedented’ step in pursuit of peace with its ten-month moratorium on Israeli housing construction in the West Bank. Furthermore, since the beginning of the current Israeli government, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called for direct negotiations with the Palestinians anytime and anywhere, without preconditions.

“Instead of negotiating directly with Israel to achieve a peaceful solution to the conflict, Palestinian leaders continue to seek to circumvent the negotiating process by advocating anti-Israel measures at the U.N. Security Council, U.N. General Assembly, and U.N. Human Rights Council. The U.S. should not condone or reward this behavior by supporting their resolutions. We strongly urge the Administration to veto this resolution and to uphold our longstanding commitment to Israel’s security.” (*Press Release – Joint Statement with Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA)*)

Rep. Peter King (D-NY)

February 17, 2011

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

I write today with grave concern over the pending resolution in the United Nations Security Council condemning Israeli settlement activity.

It has been reported that the United States Government will break with precedent and will not exercise its veto power on this biased resolution. Any action by the United States short of a veto is a dramatic and frightening shift in policy.

Condemnation of Israeli settlement activity as “illegitimate” will undermine the Jewish State in a body that has shown inherent bias toward it. The only way to address issues between the Palestinians and Israelis is through direct, bilateral negotiations.

I urge you to stand by our ally, Israel, and veto this resolution.” (*Letter to Secretary of State Hillary R. Clinton and U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nation Susan E. Rice*)

Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL)

February 17, 2011

“I strongly urge the administration to block the latest attempt by the United Nations to castigate the State of Israel. America’s commitment to its strongest democratic ally in the Middle East should not be subject to negotiation.”

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)

February 17, 2011

“Support for this anti-Israel statement is a major concession to enemies of the Jewish State and other free democracies. It telegraphs that the U.S. can be bullied into abandoning critical democratic allies and core U.S. principles.

“Palestinian leaders refuse to negotiate directly with Israel, while Israel has made unprecedented concessions and continues to repeatedly offer to negotiate anywhere, anytime. Responsible nations should be heralding Israel’s commitment to achieving peace and security, not giving credence to the relentless campaigns by anti-democratic forces to deny that commitment.

“Offering to criticize our closest ally at the UN isn’t leadership, it’s unacceptable. Pretending that criticism of Israel is OK if it comes in a ‘Presidential Statement’ instead of a resolution isn’t leadership, it’s unacceptable. Twisting and turning and tying yourself in knots to avoid using our veto to defend our allies and interests isn’t leadership, it’s unacceptable.

“The Administration should change course, stand unequivocally with Israel, and publicly pledge to block any anti-Israel UN Security Council action.” (*Press Release*)

Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY)

February 17, 2011

“Compromising our support for Israel at the UN is not an option. The United States must veto the UN resolution on settlements to make clear we will not support such a blatant attempt to derail the peace process.” (*Statement*)

Rep. Gary Peters (D-MI)

February 17, 2011

“Since the beginning of the peace process, the issue of settlements has been one reserved for final status negotiations between the parties. The United States must stand by our ally Israel and use our veto power at the United Nations Security Council to make clear that the negotiating table is the only avenue to resolving the conflict, and that efforts to single Israel out for blame and criticism are unacceptable and unfounded.”

Rep. Steve Rothman (D-NJ)

February 17, 2011

America’s support for Israel at the United Nations on the issues at hand is right on the merits and necessary for both America’s and Israel’s national security. The future boundaries of any two state solution must only be determined through direct talks between the Israelis and Palestinians and not at the U.N. Additionally, any failure to stand with Israel during these difficult times in the Middle East will only encourage the enemies of America and Israel. (*Press Release*)

Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-NY)

February 17, 2011

“This is too clever by half. Instead of doing the correct and principled thing and vetoing an inappropriate and wrong resolution, they now have opened the door to more and more anti-Israeli efforts coming to the floor of the U.N. The correct venue for discussions about settlements and the other aspects of a peace plan is at the negotiating table. Period.” ([Politico](#))