

Israel, the Palestinians, and the Administration's Peace Plan

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Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, members of the subcommittee, on behalf of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Over the past year, there have been significant changes in U.S. relations with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA). Among them: U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state, threats to withhold assistance from the Palestinian Authority unless it undertakes reforms, and the withholding of some assistance to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) unless it provides greater transparency. In addition, there has been an attempt to counter actions taken at the United Nations to delegitimize and demonize Israel.

All this is taking place as the Trump administration endeavors to build a new regional “framework” with the Arab/Sunni states who are threatened by the hegemonic – one might say imperialist – ambitions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is majority Persian and Shiite. These states are less hostile to Israel – the enemy of their enemy – than ever before.

President Trump has hoped to utilize this changed architecture to revive the Palestinian-Israeli peace process and make the “ultimate deal.” Despite these steps and developments – all positive and deserving of your support and encouragement – I am going to argue that any new peace process should be seen as only preliminary. It is unlikely that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict can be resolved in the foreseeable future.

That was true a week ago for reasons I will endeavor to explain. But initiating a new and improved peace process has become even more problematic following what transpired over the weekend. Iranian forces, operating from an airbase in Syria, sent a drone into Israeli airspace. An Israeli Apache helicopter downed it. Israel then sent eight F-16s to destroy the Iranian command center in Syria. One of the jets was overwhelmed by what the Israelis describe as “massive Syrian anti-air fire.” The pilot of that plane returned to Israeli airspace where he and his navigator ejected. Both survived. Their plane crashed on Israeli territory.¹ The region is on high alert; more conflict may lie ahead.

You will note that no Palestinian leader condemned this Iranian provocation. No Palestinian leader has ever condemned the Iranian regime, whose intentions toward Israel are openly annihilationist.

Hezbollah, Tehran’s proxy militia, has tens of thousands of missiles pointing at Israeli targets from Lebanon, a country it now effectively rules. Hezbollah is openly genocidal toward both Israelis and Jews. The leader of the “Party of God,” Hassan Nasrallah, has said: if “the Jews will gather from all parts of the world into occupied Palestine ... there the final and decisive battle will take place.”²

Hamas, the major power in Gaza, and a not insignificant presence in the West Bank, receives funding and arms from Tehran, and holds identical views about Israelis and Jews. (See the Hamas

¹ Oliver Holmes, “Israel launches 'large-scale' attack in Syria after fighter jet crashes,” *The Guardian* (UK), February 10, 2018. (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/10/israeli-fighter-jet-shot-down-by-syrian-fire-says-military>)

² Yair Rosenberg, “Did Netanyahu Put Anti-Semitic Words in Hezbollah’s Mouth?” *Tablet*, March 9, 2015. (<http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/189519/did-netanyahu-put-anti-semitic-words-in-hezbollahs-mouth>)

Covenant.³) Hamas believes that any territory conquered by Muslims must never be surrendered to non-Muslims. This is not a negotiating position. It is a matter of ideology and theology. Hamas has never been and never will be part of a serious peace process.

In this environment, it would require a Palestinian leader of enormous independence, charisma, and courage to negotiate a resolution of the conflict with Israel. Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority which (loosely) governs the West Bank, is not that leader.

Elected to a four-year term as PA president in 2005, he has remained in that position without benefit of reelection. In recent statements, he made it abundantly clear that he does not accept the basic premise of a two-state solution: two states for two peoples – one of those peoples being the Jewish people.

He does not recognize that the Jewish people has a right to self-determination in any part of its ancient homeland. He recently said that Jerusalem “is Arab, Muslim and Christian”⁴ – conspicuously omitting Jerusalem’s Jewish roots, implicitly rejecting what historian Barbara Tuchman once pointed out: that Jewish Israelis are living in the same land, speaking the same language, and worshipping the same God as did their ancestors 3,000 years ago. Few peoples can say the same.

It has been years since Mr. Abbas has been willing to sit down and negotiate with Israelis. Instead, he has taken part in a campaign to delegitimize Israel. This includes UN Security Council Resolution 2334,⁵ which passed in late 2016 and claimed that Israel has no rights in the eastern sections of Jerusalem – not even the Jewish Quarter of the Old City; not even Judaism’s holiest sites, the Western Wall and the Temple Mount. The current administration’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital has at least helped halt the momentum of this damaging narrative.

It is important to understand: This campaign has the strategic intent of justifying attacks against Israel – by Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, and others – as “resistance” to an “illegitimate regime” that sooner or later is to be fatally poisoned by a cocktail of violence, economic warfare, and diplomacy. So long as that goal appears even remotely realistic, no Palestinian leader can settle for less without painting a target on his back.

Mr. Abbas opposes what he calls “normalization” with Israel, effectively preventing Israelis and Palestinians from working together, getting to know one another, perhaps discovering that they need not be enemies forever.

The BDS campaign – for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions – is an integral part of this “anti-normalization” effort. Radical elements play an important role. BDS does not benefit Palestinians.

³ “Hamas Covenant 1988: The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement,” *Yale Law School*, August 18, 1988. (http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp)

⁴ Dov Lieber, “US peace envoy blasts Abbas for failure to mention Jerusalem’s Jewish connection,” *Times of Israel*, February 8, 2018. (<https://www.timesofisrael.com/us-peace-envoy-blasts-abbas-for-failure-to-mention-jerusalem-jewish-connection/>)

⁵ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2334, December 23, 2016. (<http://www.un.org/webcast/pdfs/SRES2334-2016.pdf>)

On the contrary, it is an important cause of the high unemployment and poverty within the West Bank.

In a serious peace process, political leaders on both sides would work toward peaceful coexistence even as negotiations proceeded on borders, security, economic relations, and other issues. That has not been the case in peace processes of the past.

At some point, after Mr. Abbas leaves the scene, a new peace process may be developed. But that will depend on who succeeds Mr. Abbas, on who next leads Palestinians. According to Palestinian Basic Law, Article 37, the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council is to “temporarily” assume the powers and duties of the PA president.⁶ Right now, that position is held by a Hamas leader who, according to the Israelis, has been involved in “terrorist activities.”

After 60 days, there are to be “free and direct elections to elect a new President.” Considering how long it has been since there have been any elections in the West Bank and Gaza, how likely is that? And if balloting fails, if instead – as has been the pattern in the Middle East for centuries – power is taken by force of arms, who is likely to prevail? Hamas? Hezbollah? Other jihadi groups?

I predict with regret: The next Palestinian president will not be Salam Fayyad, the former Palestinian Authority prime minister who, I believe, did contemplate ending the conflict with Israel so as not to sacrifice another generation of Palestinians to the dream of wiping Israel off the map. He also made a serious attempt to build the institutional foundations necessary for the establishment of a Palestinian nation-state that would not be a terrorist-supporting despotism and permanent ward of the international “donor community.”

Mr. Fayyad never had broad support on the West Bank or Gaza.⁷ Hamas despised him. And, in the end, Mr. Abbas forced Mr. Fayyad out of office. He now lives in the U.S.

Working with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Jordan, and other Sunni Arab partners, as well as any pragmatic elements that can be found within the Palestinian Authority, it may be possible for the administration and Congress to develop a next generation of Palestinian leaders who are serious about resolving the conflict, and who do not see peaceful coexistence with Israel as a euphemism for defeat. But this challenge cannot be overestimated.

I will elaborate on these and other issues and provide recommendations in further testimony below.

Jerusalem: On December 6, 2017, the president announced that it is U.S. policy to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This announcement does not predetermine the final status of Jerusalem as decided through bilateral negotiations between Israeli and Palestinians. It does not rule out the possibility of a Palestinian capital in or near eastern Jerusalem. It does, however, recognize reality as well as Israeli sovereignty.

⁶ The Palestinian Basic Law, Article 37, issued on March 18, 2003, accessed February 12, 2018.

(<https://www.palestinianbasiclaw.org/basic-law/2003-amended-basic-law>)

⁷ Clifford D. May, “May: In the West Bank, peace and prosperity are unlikely,” *Newsday*, February 6, 2013.

(<https://www.newsday.com/opinion/oped/in-the-west-bank-peace-and-prosperity-are-unlikely-clifford-d-may-1.4574344>)

I need not remind you that Democratic and Republican members of Congress, by a wide margin, voted for the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 on Oct 24, 1995. It recognizes that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel.⁸ The law was adopted by the Senate 93-5, and the House tally was 374-37.⁹ The legislation became public law on November 8, 1995. It is fair to say that President Trump has done nothing more than operationalize this overwhelming Congressional sentiment.

Congress expressed this bipartisan sentiment again in 2017. Senate Resolution 176 – a resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem – was approved in the Senate on June 5, 2017.¹⁰ It praised Israel’s commitment to religious freedom and its administration of the holy sites in Jerusalem. The resolution reaffirmed: (1) that it is long-standing U.S. bipartisan policy that the permanent status of Jerusalem remains a matter to be decided between the parties through final status negotiations towards a two-state solution; and (2) the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 as U.S. law, and calls upon the president and all U.S. officials to abide by its provisions.¹¹ The vote was 90-0.

Congressional leaders have been articulate about the need to ensure that U.S. policy recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. One example: On Oct 24, 1995, Rep. Peter Deutch, a Florida Democrat, rose “in support of H.R. 1595, which is a piece of legislation that will facilitate a long overdue movement of the United States Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This is the only Embassy in the world, American Embassy, that is not in the capital that is designated by the country that the Embassy is in.”¹²

He added: “[F]ailure to get the two-thirds vote on this bill today would be sending an exactly wrong message because it would be sending a message that there is not resolve in this Congress in support of the peace process and that there is an opening in terms of what could happen in terms of Jerusalem, that the United States Congress has weakened its supports for this peace process.”

And Chuck Schumer, then a House member, today Senate Minority leader, noted that whenever “Israel has had control of any portion of Jerusalem, it has been open. The world’s holy places have been open. When the Arab nations had control of Jerusalem between 1948 and 1967, no Jew was allowed to visit any of those holy places, and many are important to the Jewish religion, as well as the Christian and Islamic religions. Mr. Speaker, whenever I went to Israel and would have to meet with American officials and leave Jerusalem and go to Tel Aviv, it was embarrassing. It was humiliating. It was wrong. As has been said before, it is a nation’s sovereignty to choose its capital. Israel has chosen Jerusalem. It is about time the United States went along.”

⁸ Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104-45, 109 Stat. 398, codified as amended at 104 U.S.C. (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-104publ45/html/PLAW-104publ45.htm>)

⁹ 141 Cong. Rec. 165 (1995) (<https://www.congress.gov/crec/1995/10/24/CREC-1995-10-24.pdf>)

¹⁰ 163 Cong. Rec. 95 (2017) (<https://www.congress.gov/crec/2017/06/05/CREC-2017-06-05.pdf>)

¹¹ S. Res. 176, 115th Congress (2017). (<https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/sres176/BILLS-115sres176ats.pdf>)

¹² 141 Cong. Rec. 165 (1995) (<https://www.congress.gov/crec/1995/10/24/CREC-1995-10-24.pdf>)

President Trump already has instructed the State Department to begin preparations to move the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Recent reports suggest that the move could take place as soon as next year.¹³

Predictably, the announcement led to widespread condemnation of the U.S. by many in the Arab world. The UN Security Council voted to condemn the decision, but Ambassador Nikki Haley cast America's veto.

Some opponents of the announcement warned of catastrophic reactions in what is sometimes called the Muslim world.¹⁴ There were predictions that there would be another *intifada* in Gaza and the West Bank.¹⁵ There were those who attempted to incite such an uprising. But while protests were reported in a number of countries – Jordan, Pakistan, and Malaysia, among them – their size and duration did not live up to the predictions.¹⁶

In the West Bank, the dominant Fatah party declared three “days of rage” as well as a general strike two days after.¹⁷ On the night of Mr. Trump's address, top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat declared that the two-state solution was now moot and that Palestinians should fight for a one-state outcome.¹⁸ Mr. Abbas called recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital a “declaration of the United States' withdrawal from undertaking the role it has played” in the peace process.¹⁹

Palestinian Aid: The Trump administration has expressed concern about how the Palestinian Authority has been using funding provided by the United States. On January 2, 2018, the administration threatened to cut part of the \$700 million in annual aid it provides to the Palestinian Authority.²⁰ President Trump lamented that despite the hundreds of millions of dollars a year that

¹³ Mark Landler, “U.S. Presses to Relocate Embassy to Jerusalem by 2019,” *The New York Times*, January 18, 2018. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/18/us/politics/trump-israel-embassy-jerusalem.html>)

¹⁴ Nahal Toosi, “State Department Warns of Violence Ahead of Trump Jerusalem Decision,” *Politico*, December 4, 2017. (<https://www.politico.com/story/2017/12/04/trump-israel-jerusalem-violence-279735>)

¹⁵ Muhammad Shehada, “Palestinian Rage Over Trump's Jerusalem move Won't Turn into a Third Intifada,” *Haaretz* (Israel), December 6, 2017. (<https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/.premium-despite-trump-palestinians-won-t-start-a-third-intifada-1.5627898>)

¹⁶ Alastair Jamieson, “Trump Jerusalem move sparks more protests across Muslim world,” *NBC News*, December 8, 2017. (<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/trump-jerusalem-move-sparks-more-protests-across-muslim-world-n827626>)

¹⁷ Loveday Morris and Ruth Eglash, “Palestinians Clash with Israeli Troops Ahead of ‘Day of Rage’ at Trump's Jerusalem Move,” *The Washington Post*, December 7, 2017. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/hamas-calls-for-uprising-as-palestinians-protest-trumps-jerusalem-stance/2017/12/07/ecee91e0-daca-11e7-a241-0848315642d0_story.html?utm_term=.e4133c563e9f)

¹⁸ Noa Landau and Jack Khoury, “‘Two-State Solution is Over,’ Top Palestinian Diplomat Says After Trump's Jerusalem Speech,” *Haaretz* (Israel), December 7, 2017. (<https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/.premium-two-state-solution-is-over-top-palestinian-diplomat-says-1.5627973>)

¹⁹ Adam Rasgon, “Abbas Slams Trump's Jerusalem Move as ‘Condemned, Unacceptable,’” *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), December 6, 2017. (<http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Abbas-slams-Trump-Jerusalem-move-as-condemned-unacceptable-517231>)

²⁰ Anne Gearan “Trump threatens to take away more U.S. aid from Palestinians if they don't negotiate with Israel,” *The Washington Post*, January 25, 2018. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-threatens-to-take-away-more-us-aid-from-palestinians-if-they-dont-negotiate-with-israel/2018/01/25/a927e02a-01e3-11e8-8acf-ad2991367d9d_story.html?utm_term=.c92ff94dabfb)

the U.S. puts into Palestinian coffers, the U.S. gets “no appreciation or respect.”²¹ He further stated: “They don’t even want to negotiate a long overdue ... peace treaty with Israel.” Palestinian officials responded by calling Mr. Trump “not a serious man.”²² Abbas advisor Ahmed Majdalani reportedly said: “[W]e will sever all ties with the Americans,” and “this means the end of the peace process and the U.S. role there.”²³

Since this initial exchange between the administration and the Palestinian Authority, the White House has withheld \$60 million in assistance to the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA), which is the primary vehicle for administering aid to Palestinians in refugee camps across the region.²⁴ More on that immediately below.

Congress also has been expressing opposition to the PA’s continuing incitement to terrorism and celebration of terrorists. The Taylor Force Act,²⁵ named after the U.S. Army veteran who was murdered by a Palestinian in 2016 while on a visit to Israel, would require the PA to take tangible steps to condemn violence and to stop providing salaries to terrorists imprisoned after having attacked Americans and Israelis. The House of Representatives passed the legislation unanimously. The bill has not yet been brought to a vote in the Senate. Congress should support such accountability and transparency as a requirement for the foreign aid it provides. Taxpayer dollars should not be used by the PA to encourage or reward terrorism.

UNRWA: The administration’s decision to withhold part of the assistance it provides to UNRWA has further infuriated the PA. The Palestinians apparently view American payments to UNRWA as an entitlement. The administration views such payments as charitable giving by American taxpayers.

Among the largest impediments to a workable two-state solution is the growing number of Palestinians that have been granted refugee status by UNRWA. Since 1950, when UNRWA began operations, the number of Palestinians claiming refugee status has risen from approximately 800,000 to more than 5 million.

Of course, nearly 70 years after the 1948 war, we know that the vast majority of those UNRWA calls refugees are nothing of the kind. Rather, they are descendants of refugees – children, grandchildren, and even great grandchildren who have been kept in a perpetual state of dependency, subsisting on international welfare with the false hope that one day they will be settled in Israel which, given their numbers, will then become a Palestinian-majority state.

²¹ Zeke Miller and Jill Colvin, “Trump Threatens to Cut Off US Aid to Palestinian Authority,” *Associated Press*, January 3, 2018. (<https://www.apnews.com/014efbb86511429d9c09c818a76f58e0>)

²² Adam Rasgon, “Abbas Adviser: Trump’s Twitter Storm on Aid Has Absolutely No Justification,” *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), January 3, 2017. (<http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Abbas-adviser-Trumps-Twitter-storm-on-aid-has-absolutely-no-justification-532695>)

²³ Grant Rumley, “Mahmoud Abbas Doesn’t Have a Trump Strategy,” *Foreign Policy*, January 3, 2017. (<http://foreignpolicy.com/2018/01/03/mahmoud-abbas-doesnt-have-a-trump-strategy/>)

²⁴ Anne Gearan, “Trump threatens to take away more U.S. aid from Palestinians if they don’t negotiate with Israel,” *The Washington Post*, January 25, 2018. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-threatens-to-take-away-more-us-aid-from-palestinians-if-they-dont-negotiate-with-israel/2018/01/25/a927e02a-01e3-11e8-8acf-ad2991367d9d_story.html?utm_term=.c92ff94dabfb)

²⁵ Taylor Force Act, H.R. 1164, 115th Congress (2017). (<https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr/1164/BILLS-115hr1164pcs.pdf>)

UNRWA's former general counsel James Lindsay has acknowledged that "[i]n truth, the vast majority of UNRWA's registered refugees have already been "resettled" or "reintegrated" and that the "only thing preventing all of these citizens from ceasing to be "refugees" is UNRWA's unique definition of what constitutes a refugee."²⁶

If UNRWA continues its practice of designating the descendants of refugees as refugees, there will be an estimated 14.7 million Palestinian "refugees" by 2050.²⁷ That exceeds Israel's current population of 8 million,²⁸ with minorities – the largest being Arab Muslims – currently constituting as much as 25 percent.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, which deals with all non-Palestinian refugees around the world, does not award refugee status to the descendants of refugees. The UNRWA definition has no non-political logic. That said, utilizing the UNHCR definition of refugee does not imply the U.S. should cease assisting impoverished Palestinians with the goal of helping them become productive and self-supporting (a goal UNRWA has not seriously attempted to achieve).

The UNRWA claims to serve 2.1 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, 1.3 million in Gaza, 800,000 in the West Bank, 543,000 in Syria, and 463,000 in Lebanon. The UNRWA operates 702 schools, 143 healthcare facilities, and overall operates 1,118 facilities. UNRWA is staffed by close to 31,000 local employees plus 178 international staff.²⁹ By contrast, the UNHCR operates with a 10,000-person staff serving millions upon millions of refugees around the world.

The UNRWA has grown into a massive self-sustaining bureaucracy that allows the Palestinian Authority to shirk its responsibilities to provide basic services to its own people in the West Bank and Gaza and delays the permanent integration of millions into neighboring Arab states.

The agency's overall inefficiency and extraordinarily high administrative costs make the UNRWA – as currently constructed - a dubious investment for American taxpayers. At the very least, its brazen use of the descendants of refugees as pawns in a war of attrition against Israel does not deserve American support. How America spends its limited foreign assistance matters. Aiding impoverished Palestinians through aid programs has merit, but policies that do not serve the long-term interests of the United States while impeding any serious peace process ought to be reconsidered.

This reminder: In the late 1940s and 1950s, the number of Jews forced from Arab and Muslim countries was about the same as the number of Palestinians (as noted above, roughly 800,000) who

²⁶ Asaf Romirowsky and Alexander Joffe, "The True Obstacle to Peace Between Israelis and Palestinians," *Forbes*, March 26, 2013. (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2013/03/26/the-true-obstacle-to-peace-between-israelis-and-palestinians/#fabbe1953f0d>)

²⁷ Jonathan Schanzer, "Defining Palestinian refugee status and the consequences," *The Hill*, May 22, 2012. (<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/228877-defining-palestinian-refugee-status-and-the-consequences>)

²⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook," accessed February 12, 2018. (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html>)

²⁹ United Nations Relief Works Agency, "in figures," January 1, 2017. (https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/unrwa_in_figures_2017_english.pdf)

fled from what became Israel. Not one of the Jews exiled from those Middle Eastern countries – in which their families had lived for millennia – remains a refugee today. Nor are any demanding a “right of return” to their birthplaces in Arab and Muslim countries.

The need for change is clear. That has to mean the gradual transition of ersatz refugees to post-refugee status. Arab states should absorb and grant citizenship to those who for generations have lived within their territories. In the areas governed by the Palestinian Authority, new infrastructure and government institutions will be needed for PA leaders to finally take responsibility for those under their control.

Congress has been talking about UNRWA reform for years with little to show for it. Over the last decade, congressional initiatives to audit UNRWA’s expenditures, crack down on the use of UNRWA facilities by terrorists, and remove anti-Semitic textbooks from UNRWA schools have had little effect. To be sure, pushing back against the inertia of a 70-year-old bureaucracy that lives to perpetuate and expand a refugee crisis is an up-hill battle – particularly when the Department of State has too often in the past defended the status quo while ignoring the underlying problems.

With that in mind, the administration’s recent decision to withhold funds from the UNRWA marks an opportunity that Congress would be wise to seize. The elected representatives of American taxpayers should take the lead in reforming this wayward agency. And with a U.S. ambassador to the United Nations for the first time opening the door to UNRWA oversight and reform, now is the time for Congress to work collaboratively with the administration to make changes long overdue.

UN Reform: The administration is working to mute the anti-Israel drumbeat at Turtle Bay. One priority has been to mitigate the damage done by UNSCR 2334,³⁰ which the Obama administration declined to veto, and which calls upon UN member states to differentiate between the territory of the State of Israel and the territory that fell to Israel in 1967 when it fought a defensive war against its Arab neighbors. That the Six-Day War was defensive is indisputable.

Then-Egyptian President Gamel Abdel Nasser declared at the time that the grievance he intended to address was the “existence of Israel.” He promised that the war would result in “Israel’s destruction.” Cairo radio declared Israel would be “liquidated.” Syrian dictator Hafiz al-Assad – father of Syria’s current dictator, Bashar al-Assad – vowed “a battle of annihilation.” Then-Iraqi President Abdul Rahman Aref said the opportunity must be seized “to wipe Israel off the map ... to wipe out the ignominy which has been with us since 1948.” Ahmed Shukairy, a representative of the then three-year-old Palestine Liberation Organization, was asked what would happen to Israelis after the war. “I estimate that none of them will survive,” he said.³¹

Israel seized Gaza from Egypt, then the occupying power. It seized the West Bank from Jordan, then the occupying power there. Prior to those occupations, the West Bank – previously known as Judea and Samaria – had been ruled by the British Empire and, for centuries before that, by the

³⁰ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2334, December 23, 2016.

(<http://www.un.org/webcast/pdfs/SRES2334-2016.pdf>)

³¹ Clifford D. May, “Unhappy Anniversary,” *National Review*, June 14, 2007.

(<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/221280/unhappy-anniversary-clifford-d-may>)

Ottoman Empire. Never have these or any other territories constituted anything resembling a Palestinian state. Through negotiations with Israelis, the opportunity to create such a state could be opened for the first time in history. In return, however, Palestinians need to resolve their conflict with the Jewish state.

UNSCR 2334 calls the Israeli presence in eastern Jerusalem a violation of international law. Included within eastern Jerusalem: the Jewish Quarter of the Old City and the most ancient and holy sites of the Jewish people: the Western Wall, or Kotel, and the Temple Mount. During and immediately after Israel's War of Independence, Jordanian forces expelled Jews from those areas and destroyed or desecrated Jewish holy sites.

It is virtually impossible to repeal a UNSC resolution. The administration's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital at least makes clear that the U.S. regards the resolution as based on an unfair and biased reading of history and international law – as by any objective measure it is.

The U.S. Congress, to its credit, opposed UNSCR 2334. Legislators condemned it immediately. Still, it remains in place and continues to provide fodder for anti-Israelism and anti-Semitism at the United Nations and beyond.

U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley has repeatedly called for an end to the river of resolutions condemning Israel, fast flowing even at a time when the Middle East is engulfed in far more lethal crises: hundreds of thousands of Syrians killed and millions turned into refugees; Egypt at war with jihadis in Sinai; a devastating civil war in Yemen – the list goes on. About these crises, the UN says little and does less.

Ambassador Haley has threatened to cut aid to the United Nations over actions taken in the General Assembly to condemn U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. In December, Ambassador Haley announced that the U.S. had negotiated a \$285 reduction to the UN's coffers.

BDS: Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions activities represent another impediment to normalization and, not just incidentally, to the possibility of Palestinians building a viable economy. Joint ventures, economic manufacturing zones, and the making and growing of products for export have empowered Palestinians and provided much-needed jobs, more often than not, averaging two to four times the wages offered at the small number of Palestinian factories.³² BDS supporters, however, have attempted to isolate these companies and intimidate those who attempt to foster such interactions.

One example: Daniel Birnbaum is an Israeli entrepreneur, the founder of the international company SodaStream, which manufactures devices that let you turn tap water into sparkling water.

³² Devin Leonard and Yaacov Benmeleh, "How SodaStream Makes—and Markets—Peace," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, December 20, 2017. (<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2017-12-20/how-sodastream-makes-and-markets-peace>); Ali Sawafta, "For many Palestinians, Israel settlement work the only option," *Reuters*, February 22, 2016. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-palestinians-workers/for-many-palestinians-israel-settlement-work-the-only-option-idUSKCN0VV1J6>)

In an interview a few years ago, he told me that one day he had an idea: He wanted to “employ Palestinians.”

So he bought a factory on the West Bank – where unemployment runs about 30 percent – and he hired more than 500 Palestinians. He also hired 350 Israeli Arabs and 300 Israeli Jews. He paid them all “Israeli wages,” roughly four times higher than the West Bank average. Because Palestinians are not Israeli citizens and therefore do not qualify for Israeli health care, he purchased private insurance for them, as well as for their dependents, knowing full well that “each employee supports about ten family members.”³³

For a while he thought he was succeeding: He was producing a good product and providing good jobs for Palestinians and most important for him, he was demonstrating that it is possible for Israelis and Arabs, Muslims and Jews, men and women, to work together, respect each other and even learn to like one another.

Of course, the BDS campaign was soon accusing him of stealing land and “profiting from the occupation.” That was among the reasons his factory in the West Bank was eventually shut down. Efforts by BDS activists have resulted in the loss of thousands of other Palestinian jobs. Leaders of BDS organizations oppose the very existence of Israel. They seek to persuade students on college campuses that Israel is an “apartheid” regime – even as they do everything they can to separate Israelis and Palestinians, to keep them from developing anything resembling normal relations between neighbors.

One of the key BDS organizations operating in the U.S. is American Muslims for Palestine (AMP). It orchestrates BDS campaigns aimed at delegitimizing and waging economic warfare against the State of Israel.

Several individuals now working for or on behalf of AMP once worked for or on behalf of the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF), the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), and/or KindHearts for Charitable Development. All three organizations were implicated by the federal government for financing the Hamas, a designated terrorist group, between 2001 and 2011. Moreover, several of AMP’s donors were involved in organizations implicated in funding Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and even al-Qaeda.³⁴

The Blacklist: On March 24, 2016, the United Nations Human Rights Council voted to create a blacklist of companies that operate in the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and eastern Jerusalem. Thirty-two nations voted in favor of creating such a database. Fifteen countries abstained from the vote, including some members of the European Union.³⁵

³³ Clifford D. May, “Jobless and desperate Palestinians,” *The Washington Times*, October 27, 2015.

(<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/oct/27/clifford-may-jobless-and-desperate-palestinians/>)

³⁴ Jonathan Schanzer “Examining Current Terrorist Financing Trends and the Threat to the Homeland,” *Congressional Testimony before the House Homeland Security Committee Counterterrorism and Intelligence Subcommittee*, May 12, 2016. (<http://docs.house.gov/meetings/HM/HM05/20160512/104904/HHRG-114-HM05-Wstate-SchanzerJ-20160512.pdf>)

³⁵ United Nations Human Rights Council, Resolution 31/36, “Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,” April 20, 2016. (<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G16/082/57/PDF/G1608257.pdf?OpenElement>)

On January 26, 2018, the United Nations Human Rights Council released an interim report that highlighted the actions taken to investigate companies operating in these territories. The UN identified 206 companies that it believes may be operating in these areas. So far, the UNHRC has contacted 64 in an attempt to ascertain their companies' involvement in these territories.

The report did not name specific companies but rather indicated the number of entities it was pursuing and where those organizations were domiciled. The report indicated that 143 companies included in the list were based in Israel, while 22 were situated in the U.S., with an additional 7 companies operating from Germany.

Israel is an attractive place for investors because of its dynamic high tech sector and start-up culture. But the list is meant to have a chilling effect on the Israeli economy. It represents yet another example of UN bias and discrimination. Israelis are willing to help Palestinians achieve self-determination and a sustainable economy – if Palestinians are willing to peacefully coexist with Israelis. Keep in mind: The Chinese are not willing to do the same for Tibetans, the Russians are not willing to do the same for Chechens, nor will any Middle Eastern country do the same for the Kurds – to name just three examples. Yet the UN has no interest in the aspirations of these stateless nations, and no interest in criticizing those who oppress them. The double standard could hardly be more obvious and egregious.

Palestinian Leadership: The rhetoric from Palestinian leaders in response to the administration's policies can be characterized as combative. "America can no longer be the steward of the peace process on its own. We have had enough of that," declared Mahmoud Abbas' advisor, Nabil Sha'ath.³⁶ In addition, the Palestinian leadership announced it would seek recognition in more international bodies, it appealed to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to start a "judicial inquiry into Israeli settlements," and declared that it was reconsidering its recognition of Israel.³⁷

This so-called recognition is misleading. Israel is not recognized by Palestinian leaders as the homeland of the Jewish people. Furthermore, their demand that there be a "right of return" for millions of Palestinian "refugees" is intended to turn Israel into an Arab/Muslim majority state, where Jewish Israelis would become a minority. It is unlikely they would be a minority with equal rights. In no Arab/Muslim majority country today do minorities enjoy anything close to equal rights. By contrast, Israel's many minorities – Arabs, Muslims, Christians, Druze, etc. – enjoy rights and freedoms unavailable anywhere else in the region.

³⁶ Adam Rasgon, "Abbas Advisor: U.S. Can Play Role in Multilateral Peace Process," *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), December 11, 2017. (<http://www.jpost.com/American-Politics/Palestinian-advisor-US-can-play-role-in-multilateral-peace-process-517661>)

³⁷ Jack Khoury, "Abbas Declares Oslo Accords Dead: 'Trump's Peace Plan is a Slap, We'll Slap Back,'" *Haaretz* (Israel), January 15, 2018. (<https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/abbas-declares-oslo-accords-dead-trump-s-peace-plan-is-a-slap-1.5730759>); "PLO says it will seek action in UNSC, General Assembly and ICC," *Wafa News Agency* (Palestinian Territories), February 3, 2018. (<http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=ncLYdHa96338342166ancLYdH>); "PLO to study revoking its recognition of Israel," *Middle East Eye*, February 3, 2018. (<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/plo-study-revoking-its-recognition-israel-690429165>)

In recent weeks, the Palestinian position on American mediation appears to have softened. Palestinian officials are now saying they would accept an American role in the peace process so long as other international actors are involved.³⁸ However, it is unclear whether those actors would be acceptable to Israel. Just days after President Trump's speech, Mr. Abbas said the Palestinians would join more than 20 international organizations, pledging he would sign on to one every consecutive Monday.³⁹ But nearly two months later, he has not followed through. Instead, however, he has taken to deploying vitriolic language and anti-Semitic tropes.

In a strange and disturbing speech before the Palestinian Central Council on January 14, Mr. Abbas lambasted Israel and Zionism for over two hours. He blamed the problems of the Palestinians on everyone from Oliver Cromwell to Napoleon Bonaparte to Winston Churchill.⁴⁰ He dismissed the Jewish connection to the land of Israel, insisting that the Jewish state is a "colonial project that has nothing to do with Judaism."⁴¹

This was not his first descent into serious anti-Semitism: Just this past December, at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation summit in Turkey, he accused Jews of "faking and counterfeiting history and religion."⁴² In 2016, Abbas accused Israeli rabbis of poisoning Palestinian water wells during a speech to the European parliament.⁴³ And recall his PhD thesis, which played down the number of Jewish victims of the Holocaust and suggested an alliance between Zionists and Nazis.⁴⁴

Nevertheless, it was an astonishing performance for a man once heralded by many as a moderate and a peacemaker.⁴⁵ Mr. Abbas' recent comments and actions make clear that he is not a viable partner for any peace process. As President Obama's former ambassador to Israel, Daniel Shapiro,

³⁸ "Arabs seek 'multilateral' process to revive mideast peace talks," *The Daily Star* (Lebanon), February 3, 2018. (<http://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/arabs-seek-multilateral-process-revive-mideast-peace-talks-1529098>)

³⁹ Ben Lynfield, "Abbas Says Palestinians to Seek Full United Nations Membership," *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), December 19, 2017. (<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Abbas-says-Palestinians-to-seek-full-UN-membership-518442>)

⁴⁰ "Mahmoud Abbas: The PLO Should Reexamine its Agreements with Israel; We Will No Longer Accept the U.S. as Mediator," *Middle East Media Research Institute*, January 14, 2018. (<https://www.memri.org/tv/mahmoud-abbas-plo-should-reexamine-agreements-with-israel-we-will-not-accept-america-as-mediator/transcript>)

⁴¹ Dov Lieber, "Rewriting History, Abbas Calls Israel a 'Colonial Project' Unrelated to Judaism," *The Times of Israel*, January 15, 2018. (<https://www.timesofisrael.com/rewriting-history-abbas-calls-israel-a-colonial-project-unrelated-to-judaism/>)

⁴² Yair Rosenberg, "Palestinian President Accuses Jews of 'Counterfeiting History and Religion,' Claims Qur'an Says they 'Fabricate Truth'," *Tablet*, December 14, 2017. (<http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/251604/palestinian-president-accuses-jews-of-counterfeiting-history-and-religion-claims-quran-says-they-fabricate-truth>)

⁴³ Robin Emmott and Dan Williams, "Abbas says some Israeli rabbis called for poisoning Palestinian water," *Reuters*, June 23, 2016. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-palestinians-israel/abbas-says-some-israeli-rabbis-called-for-poisoning-palestinian-water-idUSKCN0Z91J8>)

⁴⁴ Ronen Bergman, "Abbas' book reveals: The 'Nazi-Zionist plot' of the Holocaust," *YNet News* (Israel), November 26, 2014. (<https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4596121,00.html>)

⁴⁵ Grant Rumley, "The Tragedy of Mahmoud Abbas," *The Atlantic*, January 21, 2018.

(<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/01/mahmoud-abbas-palestine-israel-speech/551072/>)

stated after the speech: “[T]he United States must conclude that there is no reason to believe Abbas has it within him to take the necessary decisions to reach a peace deal with Israel.”⁴⁶

Recently, Jason Greenblatt, President Trump’s chief envoy to the Middle East peace process, addressed Mr. Abbas in a series of tweets. “Pres. Abbas states about Jerusalem: ‘it is Arab, Muslim, and Christian,’ and makes no mention of any Jewish ties. Nothing peaceful or productive can come from statements like this.”⁴⁷

He added: “Lasting peace will not be achieved by denying Judaism’s thousands of years of ties to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is holy to Muslims, Christians, and Jews. Peace can ONLY be based on truth, and what [President Trump] said is the truth: ‘Jerusalem is today, and must remain, a place where Jews pray at the Western Wall, where Christians walk the Stations of the Cross, and where Muslims worship at Al-Aqsa Mosque.’”

Congress should now give serious consideration to what will follow Mr. Abbas who, at 82, is in the 13th year of his four-year elected term in office. A succession crisis is coming. A leadership crisis is already here.

The Future of the Peace Process: If there is to be a revived peace process, the next Palestinian leader will need to do what Mr. Abbas did not do: begin to prepare the Palestinian people for peaceful coexistence. That means promoting tolerance, not inciting hatred and violence against Israelis and Jews, not opposing efforts to “normalize” relations between Israelis and Palestinians, and exploring economic cooperation.

It means telling Palestinians that peace will require difficult compromises, that the extermination of Israel is no longer the goal, that the Jews will not be driven out of Jerusalem, and that there is a Jewish people who have lived in the Middle East for thousands of years, and who have a right to self-determination in part of their ancient homeland.

Once a majority of Palestinians embrace these views, the peace process will proceed rapidly toward the desired end. However, so long as Palestinian leaders and a majority of Palestinians regard compromise with Israelis and acceptance of the Jewish state as defeat, the peace process is certain to lead nowhere – as it has in the past.

Much depends on who succeeds Mr. Abbas. But establishing a reliable succession process is one of the many nation-building tasks he failed to tackle during his years in power.

There are other impediments to peace. As noted above, Hamas remains a strong force and Hamas rejects the very idea of Palestinians living in peace alongside a Jewish state. Its intentions are

⁴⁶ Daniel Shapiro, “Abbas Exits with One Final, Outrageous Performance. Now, America Must Contain the Damage,” *Haaretz* (Israel), January 17, 2018. (<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-after-abbas-outrageous-exit-america-must-contain-the-damage-1.5730854>)

⁴⁷ Michael Wilner, “Greenblatt Criticizes Abbas’ Statement on Jerusalem’s Holy Status,” *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), February 8, 2018. (http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Greenblatt-enters-war-of-words-with-Abbas-breaking-diplomatic-silence-542104?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter)

candidly annihilationist and genocidal. It continues to spend international aid money building rockets to fire into Israeli cities and constructing tunnels so that terrorists can invade Israeli towns.

Changing Regional Architecture: Relations between Israel and several of its Sunni/Arab neighbors have been improving. Driving this détente: the common threat posed by the Islamic Republic. The Saudis and Emiratis in particular appear to recognize that security cooperation with Israel is essential if Tehran is to be kept at bay.

At the same time, Israel is actively assisting Egypt in Sinai where jihadis have been waging a terrorist war. Israel's military and intelligence cooperation with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is essential to that country's security as well.

Israel's capabilities in cyber warfare, agriculture, and the science of producing clean and abundant fresh water could benefit all its neighbors.⁴⁸

It is useful for Congress to encourage rapprochement in every way possible. That said, I think we can expect only incremental improvements at this juncture. The Saudis and Emiratis cannot afford to be accused by Tehran of betraying the Palestinian cause. Iran's mullahs are only too eager to call the Saudis Zionists. Keep in mind that the Islamic Republic's position on Israel is identical to that of Hezbollah, Hamas, al-Qaeda, and the Islamic State: no conflict resolution, no peaceful coexistence – only a jihad to exterminate the Jewish state.

Wall Street Journal columnist Yaroslav Trofimov recently noted that “any Saudi opening to Israel is guaranteed to be exploited by the kingdom's rivals, and may even include a boycott of the hajj, or pilgrimage, to Mecca, a senior Saudi official cautioned.”⁴⁹

“Palestine is not an easy issue,” he quoted the official as saying. “Saudi Arabia is expecting to hold Islamic leadership, and will not let it go easily. And, if you need Israel in anything, you can do it anyway, without having a relationship.”

Still, with at least some of Israel's neighbors no longer eager to see the Jewish state wiped off the map, there is a glimmer of hope that Israelis and Palestinians can eventually find their way toward peaceful coexistence, even as terrible sectarian wars rage throughout much of their region. While the Palestinian-Israeli conflict cannot, I believe, be solved anytime soon, much can be done to stabilize the situation and prepare for opportunities that may arise in the future.

Such preparation will require significant work on the part of both Congress and the administration. But if Americans do not shoulder this responsibility, no one else will.

With this as background, permit me to suggest a few ideas and actions.

⁴⁸ Clifford D. May, “Unexpected miracle in the Holy Land,” *The Washington Times*, December 1, 2015. (<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/dec/1/clifford-may-water-in-israel/>)

⁴⁹ Yaroslav Trofimov, “For Saudis and Israelis, Cost of Open Ties Outweighs the Benefits,” *The Wall Street Journal*, February 1, 2018. (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/for-saudis-and-israelis-cost-of-open-ties-outweighs-the-benefits-1517481001>)

Policy Recommendations:

- Congress should demand that the State Department declassify a congressionally mandated report that exposes UNRWA's underlying myth – so that taxpayers can finally know how much of their funds actually support refugees from 1948 and how much are disguised welfare payments to Palestinians who should be helped instead to find productive employment in an economy not indefinitely dependent on America and other members of the “international donor community.”
- Congress should insist on an independent audit of the UNRWA. As the major funder, the U.S. has the right to know how American taxpayer money is being spent. The UN will resist, but Congress should insist – establishing clear benchmarks for continued funding and laying out a timeline for transitioning UNRWA services to the Palestinian Authority, host-nation Arab states, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the office in charge of all refugees except Palestinians.
- Congress should review the definition of “refugee” used by the UNRWA, which currently includes the descendants of refugees and has exacerbated the problem and will continue to do so over the years ahead. A definition based on the actual number of refugees would make conflict resolution much more achievable.
- Congress needs to begin the long-overdue process of serious reform at the UN. The United Nations Human Rights Council along with the UNRWA and other UN bodies are inciting hatred against Israel and passing reams of biased resolutions condemning Israel while ignoring the egregious human rights abuses being committed by the world's worst human rights violators – Iran, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Russia, China, and Cuba among them.
- Congress should take action to require greater economic transparency and integrity at the UN. American funding should depend on results.
- Congress should pass the bipartisan Israel Anti-Boycott Act.⁵⁰ This legislation would make implementation of the UNHRC blacklist of Israeli companies illegal under U.S. law and reaffirm that boycotts of this nature run afoul of the U.S. Export Administration Act. The legislation also would require the Export Import Bank to consider whether an entity complies with BDS when evaluating potential credit applications.
- BDS groups operate on college campuses in the U.S. and promote commercial boycotts of Israel in many U.S. states. Twenty-five states have enacted laws or executive orders opposing boycotts of Israel. Congress should support these efforts by passing the bipartisan Combating BDS Act,⁵¹ which would provide states additional legal protections to reject boycotts of Israel.

⁵⁰ Israel Anti-Boycott Act, S. 720, 115th Congress (2017). (<https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/s720/BILLS-115s720is.pdf>)

⁵¹ Combating BDS Act of 2017, S. 170, 115th Congress (2017). (<https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/s170/BILLS-115s170is.pdf>)

- Congress should pass the Taylor Force Act.⁵² The act passed the House but has not yet been brought to a vote in the Senate. The legislation would limit funds to the Palestinian Authority if it continues to pay terrorists salaries after they are captured, prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned in Israel. The legislation also would restrict aid if the Palestinian Authority does not take steps to end violence against American and Israeli citizens. Congress should support such accountability as a requirement for the foreign aid it provides.
- The administration, with congressional support, should attempt to work with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and other Sunni Arab partners, as well any pragmatic elements within the Palestinian Authority, to create a leadership succession plan, one that will empower Palestinian leaders who are open to conflict resolution and do not see peaceful coexistence with Israel as tantamount to defeat. Without such a plan in place, the possibility of chaos, violence and instability following Mr. Abbas' passing looms large.
- A two-state solution implies two states for two peoples – one of those people being the Jewish people. The Palestinian side must accept that premise prior to negotiations in pursuit of a two-state solution. The theory that acceptance of that premise will emerge at the end of talks has failed in the past and is likely to fail in the future.
- In a revived peace process, the U.S. should insist that political leaders on both sides take active steps toward normalization of relations and peaceful coexistence even as negotiations proceed on borders, security, economic relations, and other issues. This, too, has not been the practice in past peace processes.
- In September 2016, the Obama administration reached a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Israel guaranteeing \$38 billion over a ten-year period from FY 2019 to FY 2028. The memorandum would give Israel \$33 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and an additional \$5 billion in missile defense assistance. The funds are to be allocated in \$3.8 billion increments annually.⁵³ The agreement handcuffs the ability of Congress to appropriate funds for Israel above the \$3.8 billion level. The Israeli government agreed in a letter to return any additional funds that Congress provided for two years.⁵⁴ Congress should have the ability and flexibility to provide funds to Israel should it decide Israel needs additional resources to defend itself from the Islamic Republic and other enemies. Israel also should have the ability to use the funds for fuel in emergency situations rather than strictly limiting the funds to FMF and missile defense resources. Congress has appropriated

⁵² Taylor Force Act, H.R. 1164, 115th Congress (2017). (<https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr1164/BILLS-115hr1164pcs.pdf>)

⁵³ The White House, Press Release, “FACT SHEET: Memorandum of Understanding Reached with Israel,” September 14, 2016. (<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/09/14/fact-sheet-memorandum-understanding-reached-israel>)

⁵⁴ Josh Rogin, “Obama and Israel cut Congress out of the aid game,” *The Washington Post*, September 14, 2016. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/josh-rogin/wp/2016/09/14/obama-and-israel-cut-congress-out-of-the-aid-game/?utm_term=.574a0b57cee2)

an additional \$75 million for Israel above the \$3.8 billion in the latest appropriations bill.⁵⁵ Congress should continue to exercise its appropriations powers to provide Israel with assistance within the terms of the MOU and beyond, if necessary.

- Congress should support the transfer of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem without delay.
- Congress and the administration should recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, as FDD has previously suggested.⁵⁶

Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Deutch, thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. If I have missed any issues you wish to cover, please let me know. I look forward to your questions.

⁵⁵ Michael Wilner, "Trump Supports \$75M. Additional Aid to Israel Beyond Obama-Era MOU," *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), September 11, 2017. (<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Trump-supports-75m-supplemental-aid-to-Israel-beyond-Obama-era-MOU-504800>)

⁵⁶ Jonathan Schanzer and Mark Dubowitz, "Standing With Israel on the Golan Heights," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 16, 2017. (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/standing-with-israel-on-the-golan-heights-1487272241>)