

To Senator Richard Blumenthal, and Congresswomen Rosa DeLauro,
Congressmen Jim Himes, Joe Courtney, Chris Murphy and staff members for John Larson
July 17th and 18th of 2012
Presented in person after thoughtful meetings with the Combatants for Peace

Thank you for meeting with us today.

Here are Specific Legislative Actions that will help the United States stabilize the region and save American lives from needless wars.

1. Do not support legislation or resolutions that only address the needs of one side of the Israeli Palestinian conflict: one-sided legislation drives the parties apart and makes it harder for the U.S. to act as an impartial mediator.
2. Insist upon and sponsor legislation and resolutions that reflect the needs of both peoples: balanced resolutions build regional trust in America's role.
3. Avoid initiatives that withhold U.S. assistance to the Palestinian Authority. Such actions drive the Palestinians toward resentment, anger, and despair.
4. Refrain from initiatives that make more difficult the reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas, for this reconciliation is needed for Israeli-Palestinian peace.
5. Do not oppose new Palestinian requests for membership in UN bodies, as long as the Palestinian Authority continues to state that negotiations agreed by both parties are necessary for an ultimate peace agreement. Granting UN status affords Palestinians nonviolent means of addressing their legitimate concerns, decreasing the incentive to use violence.
6. You must actively discourage Israeli settlement expansion and consolidation, and you must discourage the confiscation and demolition of Palestinian homes as you would discourage Palestinian rocket attacks on Israel. Both home demolition and rocket attacks destabilize the situation.

Here are some Final Status issues we hope you will understand:

1. The goal must be the end of the occupation and the creation of a viable independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.
2. Unless the settlements are reversed, there will be no hope for ending this tragedy.
3. Most of the settlements are an unethical and socially violent means of exerting Israeli control and domination over Palestinians, blocking the way to peace, threatening Israel's goal of a Jewish, democratic state, and Palestine's Goals of freedom and sovereignty.
4. The border between Israel and Palestine must be based on the 1967 line, with changes based on equal and agreed swaps of land.
5. Jerusalem is precious to Jews, Muslims and Christians. There will be no peace without a shared Jerusalem, in which both Israel and Palestine will have their capitals.
6. There must be a negotiated and agreed resolution of the refugee problem based on UN resolution 194.
7. "We need your help!" Do not withdraw American aid, foreign policy initiatives, and political pressure. Remain engaged, informed, and active.
8. You must visit Peacemakers like Combatants For Peace. A congressional visit will draw attention to our work and help both sides see that they have partners who are ready, willing, and able to address all of our issues.

Combatants For Peace remains available to you and your staff at any time to answer questions, provide tours of Israel and the West Bank as experienced by former combatants, peacemakers, and civilians, offer first hand testimony from inside the conflict or simply provide feedback as you may require.

Yours with hope for a better future,

Nour Shehada, Combatants For Peace,

Erez Krispin, Combatants For Peace