

## „Stimmen Sie mit Ja!“

*Am 18. Januar 2011 richteten ranghohe Repräsentanten in US-Administrationen, die in den vergangenen Jahren mit verschiedenen Präsidenten zusammenarbeiteten, sowie US-Diplomaten, Wissenschaftler, Rabbiner und Publizisten einen Appell an US-Präsident Barack Obama, der geplanten Initiative der Palästinensischen Autonomieregierung im UN-Sicherheitsrat zuzustimmen. Die Zeit sei für ein klares Signal der Vereinigten Staaten an die Parteien und an die breitere internationale Gemeinschaft gekommen, dass die Vereinigten Staaten den [israelisch-palästinensischen] Konflikt mit Objektivität, Beständigkeit und Respekt für das internationale Recht angehen, welches erforderlich ist, wenn sie eine konstruktive Rolle bei der Lösung des Konflikts spielen wollen, heißt es in dem Appell. Auch wenn die Resolution des UN-Sicherheitsrates nicht die Frage der Siedlungen lösen oder künftige Bauaktivitäten in den besetzten Gebieten verhindern werde, sei es ein angemessener Schritt, diese Fragen anzugehen und alle Seiten davon zu informieren, dass die fortgesetzte Verletzung der internationalen Rechtsgeltung nicht mit Straffreiheit behandelt werde. Ein Veto würde die amerikanische Glaubwürdigkeit und das amerikanische Interesse schwerwiegend untergraben und die USA entschieden außerhalb des internationalen Konsenses stellen und ihre Fähigkeit schwächen, in diesem Konflikt zu vermitteln.*

*Der Appell trägt die Unterschrift von 47 Persönlichkeiten, zu denen die auch hierzulande bekannten Frank Carlucci, Carla Hills, Thomas Pickering, William B. Quandt, Edward S. Walker, Philip Wilcox und James Zogby gehören.*

Dear Mr. President,

In light of the impasse reached in efforts to revive Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, and as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) moves to consider a resolution condemning Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territory, we are writing to urge you to instruct our Ambassador to the United Nations to vote yes on this initiative.

The time has come for a clear signal from the United States to the parties and to the broader international community that the United States can and will approach the conflict with the objectivity, consistency and respect for international law required if it is to play a constructive role in the conflict's resolution.

While a UNSC resolution will not resolve the issue of settlements or prevent further Israeli construction activity in the Occupied Territory, it is an appropriate venue for addressing these issues and for putting all sides on notice that the continued flouting of international legality will not be treated with impunity. Nor would such a resolution be incompatible with or challenge the need for future negotiations to resolve all outstanding issues, and it would in no way deviate from our strong commitment to Israel's security.

If the proposed resolution is consistent with existing and established US policies, then deploying a veto would severely undermine US credibility and interests, placing us firmly outside of the international consensus, and further diminishing our ability to mediate this conflict.

If the U.S. believes that the text of the resolution is imperfect, there is always the opportunity to set forth additional U.S. views on settlements and related issues in an accompanying statement. The alternative to a Resolution – a consensus statement by the President of the UNSC – would have no stature under international law, hence this option should be avoided.

As you made clear, Mr. President, in your landmark Cairo speech of June 2009, "The United States does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements. This construction violates previous agreements and undermines efforts to achieve peace. It is time for these settlements to stop."

There are today over half a million Israelis living beyond the 1967 line – greatly complicating the realization of a two-state solution. That number has grown dramatically in the years since the peace process was launched: in 1993

there were 111,000 settlers in the West Bank alone; in 2010 that number surpassed 300,000.

The settlements are clearly illegal according to article 49 of the Fourth Geneva convention – a status recognized in an opinion issued by the State Department's legal advisor on April 28, 1978, a position which has never since been revised.

That official US legal opinion describes the settlements as being "inconsistent with international law". US policy across nine administrations has been to oppose the settlements, with the focus for the last two decades being on the incompatibility of settlement construction with efforts to advance peace. The Quartet Roadmap, for instance, issued during the Bush presidency in 2003, called on Israel to "freeze all settlement activity, including natural growth."

Indeed, the US has upheld these principles, including their application to East Jerusalem, by allowing the passage of previous relevant UNSC resolutions, including: UNSCRs 446 and 465, determining that the settlements have "no legal validity"; UNSCRs 465 and 476, affirming the applicability of the Fourth Geneva convention to the Occupied Territory; UNSCRs 1397 and 1850 stressing the urgency of achieving a comprehensive peace and calling for a two state solution; and UNSCR 1515, endorsing the Quartet Roadmap.

At this critical juncture, how the US chooses to cast its vote on a settlements resolution will have a defining effect on our standing as a broker in Middle East peace. But the impact of this vote will be felt well beyond the arena of Israeli-Palestinian deal-making – our seriousness as a guarantor of international law and international legitimacy is at stake.

America's credibility in a crucial region of the world is on the line – a region in which hundreds of thousands of our troops are deployed and where we face the greatest threats and challenges to our security. This vote is an American national security interest vote par excellence. We urge you to do the right thing.

Respectfully yours,

**Amjad Atallah**, Co-Director, Middle East Task Force, New America Foundation

**Bruce Ackerman**, Sterling Professor of Law and Political Science, Yale University

**Rabbi Leonard I. Beerman**, Leo Baeck Temple, Los Angeles

**Peter Beinart**, Associate Professor of Journalism and Political Science, the City University of New York; Schwartz Senior Fellow, New America Foundation

**Landrum Bolling**, Senior Advisor, Mercy Corps

**Hon. Everett Ellis Briggs**, former US Ambassador, Portugal, Honduras, Panama; former special advisor to President George H.W. Bush, National Security Council; former President, Americas Society and Council of the Americas

**Hon. Frank Carlucci**, former US Secretary of Defense

**Hon. Wendy Chamberlin**, President, Middle East Institute; former US Ambassador, Pakistan

**Steven Clemons**, Founder and Senior Fellow, American Strategy Program, New America Foundation; publisher, *The Washington Note*

**Hon. Walter L. Cutler**, former US Ambassador, Saudi Arabia

**Hon. John Gunther Dean**, former US Ambassador, Cambodia, Lebanon, Thailand, India

**Michael C. Desch**, Professor of Political Science, University of Notre Dame; Contributing Editor, *The American Conservative*

**Hon. James Dobbins**, former Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs

**Hon. Joseph Duffey**, former Director, US Information Agency

**Hon. Wes Egan**, former US Ambassador, Jordan

**Hon. Nancy H. Ely-Raphel**, former US Ambassador, Slovenia; former Counselor on International Law, Department of State

**Dr. John L. Esposito**, Professor of International Affairs and Islamic Studies, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University

**Rabbi Tirzah Firestone**, Board of Directors, Rabbis for Human Rights – North America

**Hon. Chas W. Freeman, Jr**, former US Ambassador,

Saudi Arabia; former President, Middle East Policy Council

**Hon. Edward W. Gnehm, Jr.**, Professor of Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Affairs, George Washington University; former US Ambassador, Jordan, Kuwait

**Hon. William C. Harrop**, former US Ambassador, Israel, Guinea, Kenya, Seychelles, Zaire

**Hon. Carla Hills**, former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and former US Trade Representative

**Hon. Roderick M. Hills**, former Chairman, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission

**Hon. H. Allen Holmes**, former Assistant Secretary of State, European Affairs; former Assistant Secretary, Political-Military Affairs; former US Ambassador, Portugal

**Hon. Arthur Hughes**, former Deputy Chief of Mission, Israel; former Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense; former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Near Eastern Affairs

**Robert Jervis**, Professor of International Affairs, Columbia University; former President, American Political Science Association

**Christian A. Johnson**, Professor, Hamilton College

**Michael Kahn**, Professor Emeritus of Psychology, University of California, Santa Cruz

**Hani Masri**, Publisher, *The Palestine Note*

**Hon. David Mack**, Vice President, Middle East Institute; former US Ambassador, UAE; former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Near Eastern Affairs

**Hon. Richard Murphy**, former Assistant Secretary of State, Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs; former US Ambassador, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Mauritania

**William Nitze**, former Assistant Administrator for International Activities, Environmental Protection Agency; Trustee, the Aspen Institute

**Hon. Robert Pastor**, former Senior Director, National Security Council; Professor of International Relations, American University

**Hon. Thomas Pickering**, former Undersecretary of State, Political Affairs; former US Ambassador, Russia, India,

Israel, El Salvador, Nigeria, Jordan, United Nations

**Paul Pillar**, former National Intelligence Officer, Near Eastern Affairs; Director of Graduate Studies, Security Studies program, Georgetown University

**Hon. Anthony Quainton**, former US Ambassador to Kuwait and Peru; former Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security; former Ambassador-at-Large and Coordinator for Counter Terrorism, State Department

**William B. Quandt**, Professor, Middle East history, University of Virginia; former National Security Council Middle East Assistant, President Carter

**Hon. Roscoe Suddarth**, former US Ambassador, Jordan; former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

**Andrew Sullivan**, Senior Editor, *The Atlantic*; Editor and Publisher, *The Daily Dish*

**Hon. Nicholas Veliotis**, former Assistant Secretary of State, Near East and South Asian affairs; former U.S. Ambassador to Egypt and Jordan; former Deputy Chief of Mission to Israel

**Hon. Edward S. Walker, Jr.**, former US Ambassador, Israel, Egypt, UAE; former Assistant Secretary of State, Near Eastern Affairs

**Hon. Allen Wendt**, former US Ambassador, Slovenia; former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, International Energy and Resources Policy

**Hon. Philip Wilcox**, President, Foundation for Middle East Peace; former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Middle Eastern Affairs; former Ambassador-at-Large and Coordinator for Counter Terrorism, State Department

**Col. Lawrence Wilkerson** (USA, ret), former Chief of Staff, Department of State; Visiting Professor, College of William & Mary

**James Zogby**, President, Arab American Institute

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