

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 30, 2009

Dear Colleagues,

We invite you to join us in signing a letter to President Obama urging strong U.S. involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process.

Many years of U.S. leadership and support have led to peace treaties between Israel and both Egypt and Jordan, and the United States has an important role to play in reaching a comprehensive resolution between the Israeli and Palestinian people.

As a close friend and ally of Israel, the United States must work in close concert with Israel to ensure that any settlement reached takes into account risks it will face in any peace agreement. Furthermore, we must redouble our efforts to eliminate support for terrorist violence and strengthen the Palestinian institutions necessary for the creation of a viable Palestinian State living side-by-side, in peace with Israel.

Finally, we urge President Obama to encourage greater involvement and participation by the Arab states both in moving toward normal ties with Israel and in encouraging moderate Palestinian elements.

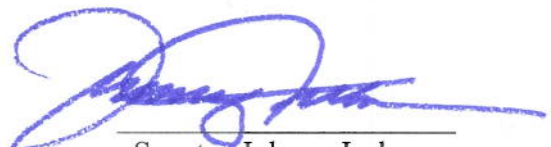
We hope that you will join us in encouraging President Obama to take advantage of this historic opportunity to recommit the United States to the realization of a lasting and comprehensive peace agreement between the Israeli and Palestinian people.

Please contact Ben Weingrod in Senator Dodd's office at Ben_Weingrod@dodd.senate.gov or Houston Ernst in Senator Isakson's Office at Houston_Ernst@Isakson.senate.gov to have your Senator's name added to the letter. This letter's deadline is COB Wednesday, May 13.

Sincerely,



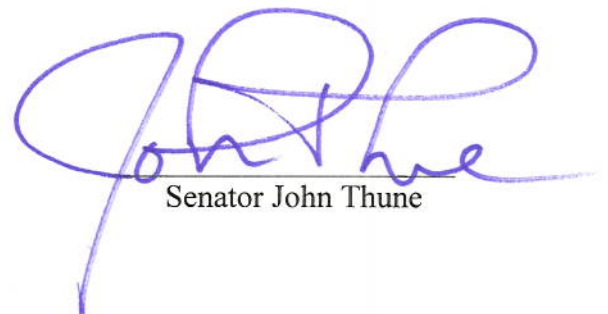
Senator Christopher Dodd



Senator Johnny Isakson



Senator Arlen Specter



Senator John Thune

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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,