



The Alliance for Middle East Peace

Momentum Towards the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

Jewish Council For Public Affairs - Draft Resolution On Israeli-Palestinian Coexistence, Sponsored by the Union for Reform Judaism, the Orthodox Union, Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh – May 2018

Throughout its history, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) has worked to advance peace and understanding between Israel and the Palestinians. Committed leadership on both sides is essential to achievement of that goal. As an organization devoted to relationship building we know that a strong grassroots foundation for such peace is equally important, built through people to people engagement.

To that end, the JCPA supports the creation of the proposed International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace with the goal of promoting and supporting “contact, cooperation, dialogue, shared community building, peaceful coexistence, joint economic development, and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians,” civil society projects, economic development and bringing about a peaceful future for Israel and the Palestinians alike.

Alistar Burt, Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department of International Development – February 20th, 2018 – UK House of Commons

"The United Kingdom supports the concept of an international fund for Israeli-Palestinian peace. The Department for International Development's people-to-people programme has similar aims, and brings together individuals from both sides to build support for a durable solution... Many of us have worried over the years that one of the worst aspects of the conflict has been the separation of peoples. To that extent, we are following the concept of the development of this fund very carefully, and I will continue to take a strong personal interest in it. The sentiment behind it is exactly why we have the £3 million programme, but we will be watching the development of the international fund and giving it support where we can."

Nickolay Mladenov, United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process – February 20th, 2018 – Statement to the United Nations Security Council

“I also hope that we will be able to look beyond the closed, dark negotiating rooms that are currently empty of diplomats and politicians, to see that there are Israeli and Palestinian advocates for peace working tirelessly to promote change: civil society organizations; youth and women’s groups; religious and community leaders – they all have a critical role to play and must be supported and allowed to express their views freely. We rarely discuss their role, we don’t speak often enough of the challenges they face, but their efforts must be recognized and supported.”



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Amb. Dan Shapiro, Former U.S. Ambassador to Israel – February 14th, 2018 - Testimony to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs

"One more contribution Congress can make is to increase funding for creative approaches to sustaining prospects for two-states outside of traditional assistance programs. We have seen the impact of people-to-people programs, like the Congressionally-mandated Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) grants, which support NGOs that build people-to-people ties between Israelis and Palestinians, and between different groups within each society. These programs build grassroots support for reconciliation and conflict resolution, and increase support for and belief in a twostate solution among those who take part."

Jason Isaacson, Director of Government and International Affairs, American Jewish Committee – July 31st, 2017 – Letter to Members of the House of Representatives

On behalf of AJC, the global Jewish advocacy organization, I write today to ask you to support H.R.1221, the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace Authorization Act of 2017. This bill, introduced by Representatives Fortenberry and Crowley, urges the President to work with Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the international community to establish a “a non-political, mutually acceptable International Fund to promote and support contact, cooperation, dialogue, shared community building, peaceful coexistence, joint economic development, and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.”

AJC supports a two-state solution reached through direct negotiations between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority. Furthermore, AJC believes that in order to create a safe and secure Israel, as well as an independent, democratic, and non-militarized Palestinian state, United States engagement with, and aid to, regional partners and initiatives is essential.

In the absence of direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, a near-term resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict appears remote. Although political efforts toward a two-state solution are at a standstill, civil society can still take active steps to promote peace. Initiatives such as H.R.1221 provide an opportunity for the United States to further contribute to peace-building between Israelis and Palestinians on the people-to-people level.

While the quest for Israeli-Palestinian peace is dependent on a variety of factors, including the volatile and uncertain political realities of the region, the grassroots activities and exchanges between Israelis and Palestinians facilitated by the fund created by H.R.1221 could improve stability and promote future reconciliation.

Thank you for considering AJC’s views on this matter.



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Jonathan Powell, Chief Negotiator on the Northern Irish Peace Process and Former Chief of Staff to Prime Minister Tony Blair – July 12th, 2017 – BICOM Report preface

“Ned Lazarus’ comprehensive study, based on his experience as both an accomplished practitioner and a leading scholar of Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding, is the most detailed evaluation we have to date of what works and why. It complements the Quartet’s recommendations by detailing the past and present of Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding, and concludes with recommendations for broadening and deepening the impact of this essential work in the future.

The report makes a persuasive case for the UK government to support efforts already underway to establish an International Fund for Israel- Palestine to “scale up” Israeli-Palestinian civil society trust building .

By following the successful precedent of the International Fund for Ireland, the proposed new Fund would provide a consistent, sustainable and transparent funding source equipped to bring to scale the successful models and the best practices discussed here by Lazarus.”

Gillian Merron, Chief Executive, The Board of Deputies of British Jews, and Simon Johnson, Chief Executive, The Jewish Leadership Council – July 5th, 2017 – Joint Statement

“While direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority are currently stalled, this is no excuse for the world to stand idle.

“Instead, we should be investing now in the kind of grassroots people-to-people projects which bring together Israelis and Palestinians and promote the values of peace, coexistence and reconciliation which will be needed to underpin any future political progress.

“We are pleased to support LFI’s campaign in support of an International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, which will help boost this much-needed on the ground, civil society work. We call on the government to support this initiative and use its influence in international fora to help bring this fund to fruition.”

President Mahmoud Abbas to President Trump – May 3rd, 2017

“Mr. President, I affirm to you that we are raising our youth, our children, our grandchildren on a culture of peace. And we are endeavoring to bring about security, freedom and peace for our children to live like the other children in the world, along with the Israeli children in peace, freedom and security.”

Rt Hon Tony Blair, Former British Prime Minister and Quartet Representative – March 2nd, 2017

“Happy to support International Fund for Israel-Palestine, based on the Fund for Ireland which helped build vital people-to-people contacts.”



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Ethan Felson and Geri Palast, Executive Directors of the Israel Action Network – March 1st, 2017

“The International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace is urgently needed to build the foundation for lasting peace and security for both parties. The Israel Action Network, a strategic initiative of the Jewish Federations of North America and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, builds a strong base of support for Israel and counters delegitimization. We have long recognized that people-to-people encounters are essential to break down mistrust and to build relationships, empathy and a path to peace.”

Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO, Anti-Defamation League – February 28th, 2017

“At a time when issues around the Israeli Palestinian conflict are more polarizing than ever, we commend Reps. Fortenberry and Crowley for rallying together in a bipartisan effort to seed the ground for a viable and sustainable peace. Building cooperation across political, religious and sectarian lines can help promote trust among the two peoples that reconciliation is possible. We urge other Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to follow their lead.”

William C. Daroff, Senior Vice President for Public Policy, Jewish Federations of North America – February 24th, 2017

“The Jewish Federations of North America welcomes and supports the introduction of Congressman Jeff Fortenberry and Congressman Joe Crowley's legislation to enact and fund an International Fund for Israeli Palestinian Peace. Jewish Federations across North America have been investing in Jewish-Arab cooperative educational programs and economic opportunities and believe that this initiative can help establish the necessary foundations for peace between Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians. We urge members of Congress to help those on the ground looking for peace to get behind this initiative.”

Hilik Bar, MK, Deputy Speaker of the Knesset and Chair of the Lobby on resolving the Arab Israeli Conflict – February 28th, 2017

"As a long term believer in the people-to-people movement I am delighted that Congressman Jeff Fortenberry and Congressman Joe Crowley have taken a leadership role in introducing the International Fund for Israeli Palestinian Authorization Act. I have followed this initiative and have written letters to the diplomatic community in support of it. A solid foundation of trust between Israelis and Palestinians is essential for ensuring success at the negotiating table and the Fund can help bring the necessary resources to enable the groups who build this trust to thrive."

Friends Committee on National Legislation – February 22nd, 2017

“FCNL thanks Congressman Crowley and Congressman Fortenberry for their bipartisan effort to support Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding efforts. Congress should seize the opportunity to amplify the voices of Israelis and Palestinians working for a just and lasting peace, and support this initiative.”



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Jewish Council for Public Affairs – February 2017

"The Jewish Council for Public Affairs long has supported the vision of two states, a Jewish and democratic Israel alongside a state of Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security. While a final status agreement remains elusive, Israeli and Palestinian NGOs have continued to work on the ground to foster greater understanding and mutual's respect, and to find ways of enhancing the quality of life for both peoples. In essence, building an environment of peace from the ground up. Today a bill is being introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Fortenberry of Nebraska and Congressman Crowley of New York that calls for an international grant making body. Together with the Jewish Federations of North America, the American Jewish Committee and others, the JCPA is pleased to add its endorsement. And we hope our member agencies will advocate support to members of Congress in their respective communities as well."

Shimon Fogel, CEO, The Center for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) Canada – The Globe and Mail – January 15th, 2017

"CIJA has recommended a number of these types of programs to Canadians for years through our Seek Peace and Pursue It initiative. This includes projects to unite Jewish and Arab teenagers, university students, medical professionals, and community leaders. Recently, international groups like the Alliance for Middle East Peace have launched a more comprehensive and ambitious agenda to advance the same objective.

There is a promising precedent for this type of engagement. After the Anglo-Irish Agreement was reached in 1986, the International Fund for Ireland was established to create conditions for peace between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. Over the next three decades, more than a billion dollars was distributed through the fund, strengthening public support on both sides for what was ultimately a successful accord."

Open letter by 56 UK MPs to Secretary of State for International Development – December 12th, 2016

"We urge you to both support the creation of the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, and to show Britain's commitment to this vital cause by increasing spending on coexistence work. As an interim measure, we would like to see spending rise from its current level to £1.35m.

Without sufficient funding – either from governments or private philanthropy – coexistence projects are currently only able to have a limited impact. Operating at scale and properly funded, they could, however, help to build powerful constituencies for peace in Israel and Palestine, forcing leaders in both countries to return to meaningful negotiations."



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Quartet Report – July 1st, 2016 – Recommendation 10

"Both parties should foster a climate of tolerance, including through increasing interaction and cooperation in a variety of fields – economic, professional, educational, cultural – that strengthen the foundations for peace and countering extremism."

Holy See Mission to the United Nations – June 29th, 2016

“The Holy See also believes that the whole peace process does not depend solely on formal negotiations no matter how indispensable these are. Peace cannot be achieved if healing and reconciliation, mutual recognition and respect at the personal and communitarian levels do not accompany political solutions. For this reason, my delegation is pleased that this Conference is going to consider the role of civil society and track II diplomacy in taking stock of the next steps in the peace process.

The Middle East should be a fertile ground for civil society and track II diplomacy, including faith-based "informal diplomacy". As a cradle of great civilizations and the birthplace of the three main monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the Middle East is fit to foster the involvement of civil society and track II diplomacy in peacemaking and peacebuilding.”

Dr. David Pollock, Washington Institute for Near East Policy – Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee – July 7th, 2016

“Third, the U.S. should quietly encourage Israel and the Palestinians to agree on new practical form of economic cooperation, and of people-to-people interaction. In particular, without sacrificing security or political bargaining positions, they could greatly upgrade the scope of Palestinian construction and other business activity in Area C, for which international investment would be readily available. This is not about the false promise of “economic peace,” which I realize is not a substitute for political agreements. Rather, it would be a good-faith, short-term measure to improve the objective situation, and the subjective atmosphere, for people on both sides, pending more fundamental positive changes and hopefully also leading in that direction. And it would correspond to the expressed wishes of the local Palestinian population, who despite the siren call of BDS overwhelmingly tell Palestinian pollsters that they want more, not less, Israeli jobs, investment, and overall economic interaction.

In this context, the PA’s equivocal encouragement of “anti-normalization” campaigns is a serious and completely counterproductive barrier to peace. Despite this obstacle, there are many brave souls and competent NGO leaders, on both sides, who continue to work together on social coexistence and cooperation projects. They need and richly deserve our intensified support, especially at this time when high-level political efforts are stymied. I would even go further, and say that these people-to-people programs are among the very best long-term investments we can all make in promoting the possibility of peace. This is much more than just feel good symbolism; it really matters, and it really works. It worked in Northern Ireland, in Rwanda, and elsewhere, where it proved to be a crucial missing link in resolving equally bloody and entrenched ethnic or sectarian conflicts.



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The more these people-to-people projects can be scaled up, the more they are likely to make a major positive difference. There is currently a bipartisan bill, HR 1489, to create an International Fund for precisely that purpose. I respectfully urge you to give this bill your full support, in the firm conviction that it will pay multiple dividends in the coming years.”

President Reuven Rivlin – Speech to European Parliament – June 22nd, 2016

“And things can be done. This mission of creating the terms for a future agreement, creating an infrastructure for trust, and for a life of dignity for both peoples, demands of us today - the international community and Israel alike - to invest tremendous efforts in four main avenues.

“Investing in joint ventures aimed at creating joint interests. Whether we wish it or not, we - Israelis and Palestinians - share a small and common area, with common regional resources and assets, and common regional challenges. We should foster and promote joint Israeli-Palestinian development ventures in the fields of renewable energy, infrastructure and the environment, joint industrial and tourism ventures, and cultural and social ventures; between Israeli and Palestinian local authorities, and between private corporations and business people on both sides.”

Increasing stability, developing infrastructures and strategic terms are essential conditions, but are not enough. Creating the conditions for any future agreement requires conditioning hearts on both sides for the possibility of living with mutual respect. Peace is made between leaders but peace is also made between peoples. Changing present trends requires addressing deep-rooted hatred and fear. Otherwise fear will have the upper hand, if only because it is to our regret, much more tangible than hope.”

Dan Diker, Former General Secretary of the World Jewish Congress, and Martin Raffel, former Senior Vice President on the Jewish Council of Public Affairs – April 12th, 2016

“Tens of thousands are currently engaged in people-to-people programs organized by such NGOs, many of which operate on shoestring budgets and have long waiting lists. These programs have a ripple effect, touching not only the direct participants but their families and communities as well. They often have a stabilizing influence, reducing violence and the hatred that gives rise to it. A substantial international fund would enable these NGOs to scale up and extend the impact.

Past peace process negotiators such as Dennis Ross and Martin Indyk have lamented that, while pursuing an elusive conflict-ending treaty, too little attention was paid to grass roots activities. But it's not too late.

Hawks and doves can continue to respectfully debate and disagree about political issues. At the same time, let us come together to support a more robust ongoing effort to anchor any future agreement between Israeli and Palestinian leaders in a genuine and lasting peace between the peoples.”



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Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – July 25th, 2015 – Statement

Dear Arab citizens of Israel, Muwatinuna al arab al aezaa,

Before my election, I said Arabs voters were going to the polls in droves.

I was referring to a specific political party but many people were understandably offended. I apologized for how my comment was misunderstood. But today I want to go further.

Today I am asking Arab citizens in Israel to take part in our society—in droves. Work in droves, study in droves, thrive in droves. Israel is strong because of our diversity and pluralism—not in spite of it.

Over 20% of Israel's citizens are Arabs. And you have achieved incredible heights: Supreme Court justices, members of parliament, renowned authors, entrepreneurs, high tech business-owners, doctors, pharmacists.

I am proud of the role Arabs play in Israel's success. I want you to play an even greater role in it. Now, respecting minorities isn't just the right thing to do—it's critical to our progress. But talking about equality of opportunity – that's not enough. Action is what matters. My government recently passed a resolution to invest massive resources in Arab communities.

Arab communities are receiving unprecedented support for public infrastructure, for transportation, for employment, for welfare, for so many other things. And the reason for this is simple. Because your future is our future. Yet significant gaps remain.

I will never forget the conversation I had in a Knesset committee with a young Muslim woman. Her husband and sons were gunned down in an Arab town. She was shaking. She begged me, she said, "Prime Minister, please increase law and order in the community where I live."

And this is exactly what we're doing. Yesterday, the government approved legislation that would significantly strengthen public safety for Arab towns and villages. They're yearning to be free from a life of crime and violence.

My vision is that young Arab boys and girls grow up knowing they can achieve anything in Israel as valued and equal citizens in our democracy.

Today I ask you all to join me in this effort. Now, each of us has a role to play. Jews and Arabs should reach out to each other, get to know each other's families. Listen to each other.

Jews and Arabs should treat one another with the same dignity and respect you'd want for your own family. Our land is too small, it's too precious to fill it with discord and hate. Let us work together, Arabs and Jews alike, to reach ever higher in the noble pursuit of equality and dignity for all. This is my vision and I'm sure it's yours too.



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J Street Policy Statement

“The interests at stake in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are broader than just physical security and borders. The ability and right of people on both sides of the conflict to live their lives to their fullest potential and to have their basic needs met are seriously impacted by the ongoing conflict.

J Street supports efforts that aim to give the people trapped by this conflict a stake in the future, to ensure that their basic needs are met and that the economic and other benefits of conflict resolution are understood. A strategy of investment aimed at advancing human security is the best answer to those who promote divestment.

J Street therefore supports: Increasing funding for people-to-people programs that bring Israelis and Palestinians together at the grassroots level, including efforts to combat violence and incitement, including the establishment of an international fund modeled on that created for Northern Ireland.”