



May 11, 2010

Dear Secretary Clinton,

We are writing to congratulate you on the re-launching of indirect Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. We want to see these talks succeed and lead quickly to full-fledged bilateral negotiations. We care about Israel and want to see a peace agreement that ends the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by resolving all the permanent status issues.

Achieving this goal requires both Israel and the Palestinians to act in good faith – refraining from actions that poison negotiations or undermine the prospects of achieving a permanent status agreement. In this regard, we welcome your spokesman’s statement that “We have received commitments from both sides, and we have made assurances to both sides, that are enabling us to move forward.”

We further welcome his assertion that both parties know that “if either takes significant actions during the proximity talks that we judge would seriously undermine trust, we will respond to hold them accountable and ensure that negotiations continue.” This negotiating effort will not succeed if America is not patient, tough and resolute in its role as broker, ready to bring real pressure to bear on the parties if they fail to act in good faith.

This is especially true with respect to Jerusalem. As recent events demonstrate, failure to get Jerusalem under control leaves a “veto by provocation” in the hands of innumerable spoilers. Such provocations are a certainty if the American understandings with Israel do not include red lines defining certain Israeli actions in East Jerusalem – including demolitions, evictions, expansion of or approval of expansion plans for settlements and settler enclaves, and controversial development of the Old City’s historic basin – as totally unacceptable. Likewise, such provocations are a certainty if U.S. understandings do not also make clear that crossing these red lines will carry consequences.

If America fails to be resolute in this arena, U.S. credibility and the viability of the Administration’s peace efforts will fade, impacting attitudes and events not only in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, but throughout the region and the world.

We urge you and your colleagues– for the sake of both American and Israeli national security interests – to hold firm in your commitment to hold the parties accountable if they act to undermine peace efforts. We urge you to do so regardless of any outside pressure to the contrary, particularly with respect to Jerusalem. We applaud your achievement in getting talks started and we have every confidence in your commitment and ability to move this process forward.

Sincerely,

Martin Bresler  
Chairman

Debra DeLee  
President & CEO

