



One Hundred Fourteenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
2170 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
[www.foreignaffairs.house.gov](http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov)

March 25, 2015

The Honorable Samantha Power  
U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations  
U.S. Mission to the United Nations  
799 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Madam Ambassador:

We are writing to express our deep and abiding support for American leadership in the Middle East peace process, with the understanding that any lasting solution will be decided by the parties themselves. As the President said in 2011: “[U]ltimately, it is up to the Israelis and Palestinians to take action. No peace can be imposed upon them—not by the United States; not by anybody else.” Those words were true then, and remain true today.

We are concerned by reports that the Administration is “re-evaluating” United States policy toward Israel. In the wake of comments that Prime Minister Netanyahu made during Israel’s election last week—that he has now contextualized—the Administration appears to be considering new steps at the United Nations that could depart from our nation’s historic and principled defense of Israel at the United Nations against biased and one-sided resolutions.

As you know, for decades, the U.S. has used its U.N. Security Council veto to protect Israel from undue pressure at the world body, which has historically exhibited selective and unjustified bias against Israel. We appreciate the steps the Obama Administration has taken in this regard. For example, earlier this month at the 28th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Secretary of State John Kerry made impassioned remarks, noting that body’s singular focus on Israel’s alleged human rights abuses to the exclusion of far more egregious conduct by the world’s worst actors. We also understand that even after these reports surfaced about a potential re-evaluation of U.S. policy, the United States coordinated with Israel and refused to participate in the UN Human Rights Council session on March 23, 2015 on so called “Item 7 resolutions”—dealing with the situation in the Palestinian territories because these sessions have historically been biased and one-sided.

The Honorable Samantha Power

March 25, 2015

Page 2

We share the frustration that further progress has not been made in Middle East peace negotiations toward a two-state solution. We join in the Administration's efforts to encourage the parties to return to the negotiating table and take steps to assure the other side of their commitment to a more peaceful and secure future. However, it is difficult to see how such a shift in U.S. policy at the United Nations would bring the parties closer to peace. Both Republican and Democratic Administrations have recognized that efforts to internationalize the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are not a substitute for direct negotiations between the parties, and in fact, can undermine these negotiations.

Given the serious threats facing both the United States and Israel, cooperation is needed now more than ever. We continue to support direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority toward a two-state solution and will oppose any effort to turn to the Security Council for imposing the terms of this process. Only a solution negotiated directly between the Israelis and Palestinians can result in a lasting peace.

We are seeking an assurance from you that the United States will veto resolutions at the United Nations that are biased and one-sided against Israel. We thank you for your consideration of these views, and look forward to working with you to ensure that robust U.S.-Israeli relations continue.

Sincerely,



EDWARD R. ROYCE  
Chairman



ELIOT L. ENGEL  
Ranking Member