

Americans for Peace Now

Briefing for the 110th Congress



***Securing Israel's Future
Through Peace***

Americans for Peace Now (APN) was established in 1981 to mobilize support for the Israeli peace movement, Shalom Achshav (Peace Now). APN has since developed into the leading American Jewish Zionist organization actively working to achieve a comprehensive political settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

APN is the leading voice of American Jews who support Israel and know that only peace will ensure Israel's security, prosperity, and continued viability as a Jewish, democratic state. Positions advocated for more than two decades by APN and Shalom Achshav – like calling for the evacuation of settlements and the creation of a viable Palestinian state – are now recognized by most Israelis and non-Israelis as basic requirements both for peace and for a secure future for Israel.

APN is a non-partisan organization with a non-partisan mission, actively engaging the Administration, Members of Congress, and key staff of both parties. We supply timely information and education, providing a pro-Israel, pro-peace, American Jewish perspective on issues and legislation. APN also engages in grassroots political activism and outreach to the American Jewish and Arab American communities, opinion leaders, university students, and the public at large. APN further promotes its agenda through press releases, editorials, and personal contacts with journalists, serving as a respected source of balanced information, analysis, and commentary.

The Israeli Peace Now movement, Shalom Achshav, was established in 1978, when 348 senior reserve army officers and combat soldiers came together to urge their government to sign a peace treaty with Egypt. They knew then what remains true today – real security for Israel can be achieved only through peace. In the years since its establishment Shalom Achshav has worked for the achievement of peace agreements between Israel and all her Arab neighbors, and has come to be recognized, both in Israel and abroad, as Israel's leading grassroots, Zionist movement.

Best known for mobilizing mass demonstrations, for many years Shalom Achshav has also been the only group conducting comprehensive monitoring of Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank (and until recently, the Gaza Strip). Shalom Achshav is widely cited in the Israeli and international media as the foremost authority on settlements. In November 2006, Peace Now's reporting made the front page of the New York Times, which noted that Peace Now "has a record of careful and accurate reporting on settlement growth." In November 2003, the director of Peace Now's Settlements Watch program testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Near East Subcommittee.

Americans for Peace Now

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Debra DeLee
President/CEO



January 2007

Dear Member of the 110th Congress:

In the coming two years, you will be called upon – by the Administration, fellow legislators, lobbyists, grassroots organizations, and constituents – to take positions on issues related to Israel and efforts to achieve security and peace in the Middle East. You will be asked to co-sponsor legislation, cast votes, sign letters, and make statements that can have a profound impact on issues of vital importance to both the United States and Israel. Your actions will be scrutinized and debated not only by colleagues, voters, and interested organizations, but by people all over the world who care about Israel.

As you consider your actions on these issues, we urge you to remember that **the majority of American Jews support Israel and support U.S. efforts to help achieve Israeli-Arab peace.**

For more than 20 years our organization, **Americans for Peace Now (APN)**, has been the leading voice of the Zionist, pro-peace American Jewish community. Our name does not reflect some naïve belief that peace can come in an instant, but denotes an objective. If anything is naïve, it is the belief that Israel can have real security and a future as a stable, prosperous, Jewish and democratic state without also achieving peace with its Arab neighbors.

APN, like our sister organization in Israel, Peace Now, is not a pacifist organization. We recognize Israel's right and responsibility to defend itself against terrorism and other threats, and we support the maintenance of a strong Israeli military with real deterrent capability. At the same time, we recognize that real security for Israel is a function of both a strong military and a real commitment to achieving peace.

We look forward to continuing our work on Capitol Hill with the 110th Congress. This booklet contains a snapshot of key facts and APN positions on many of the most important Israel-related issues that will likely arise during the 110th Congress. We hope that you and your staff will find this booklet helpful, and we look forward to providing you additional information, analysis, and policy recommendations in the future.

Sincerely,

Debra DeLee
President & CEO

Lara Friedman
Director of Policy & Government Relations

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CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

It is not sufficient to articulate a desire for peace and stability for Israel; it is necessary to work to achieve it. As the bipartisan Iraq Study Group observed in its report issued December 6, 2006: "The United States cannot achieve its goals in the Middle East unless it deals directly with the Arab-Israeli conflict and regional instability. There must be a renewed and sustained commitment by the United States to a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace on all fronts: Lebanon, Syria, and President Bush's June 2002 commitment to a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine."

It is critical, for both Israel and the U.S., to resolve Israel's struggle with the Palestinians and the simmering conflict with the Arab world. History is clear: Israel achieved security along its borders with Egypt and Jordan not on the battlefield but at the negotiating table, with security guarantees that have stood the test of time. Israelis were safest from Palestinian attacks when the peace process was on track and the Palestinian leadership was invested in maintaining quiet. History is clear, too, where Lebanon is concerned: From Israel's first foray into Lebanon in 1978, to its 18-year occupation of south Lebanon, to the summer 2006 war with Hezbollah, military action has been unable to deliver real security for Israel on that border. Lacking security guarantees and a partner on the other side, security has remained elusive.

Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion (quoted by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on November 27, 2006) said, "I would consider it a great sin, not only towards our generation but towards future generations as well, if we did not do everything in our power to reach a mutual understanding with our Arab neighbors, and if future generations had cause to blame the Government of Israel of missing an opportunity for peace."

Finally, while terrorism must not be tolerated, dogmatic refusal to engage with various parties in the region has placed at risk both Israeli and U.S. interests, giving rise to the unprecedented situation where the U.S. has virtually no political or diplomatic room to maneuver. This is a mistake. The U.S. would do well to bear in mind the words of former Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, who famously stated, "If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies."

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **demand and support sustained, serious U.S. engagement to achieve progress toward Israeli-Arab peace, consistent with U.S. and Israeli interests and as called for in the report of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group (also known as the Baker-Hamilton Commission), issued December 6, 2006; and**
- **press the Bush Administration to bring to bear the full force of American political and diplomatic influence to achieve progress toward Israeli-Arab peace, including the re-opening of talks between Israel and Syria.**

**THE
IMPERATIVE TO
"SEEK PEACE
AND PURSUE
IT"**

Need more
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this issue?

Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

THE U.S.- ISRAEL SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

America is and must remain Israel's most important friend and ally in the world. Since the birth of the Jewish state, American leaders have maintained a special relationship between Israel and the United States, based both on shared values and interests, and on U.S. recognition of the historical imperative to provide a safe homeland for the Jewish people. The deep U.S. commitment to Israel has been demonstrated over the years with substantial economic and military support and uncompromising moral and diplomatic support in the international arena – support that has helped Israel survive and flourish, and enabled Israel to maintain its vital military edge in this dangerous region. Support for Israel is not and should never be a partisan issue.

American leaders have also understood that real peace and security for Israel are linked to the achievement of enduring peace agreements between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and that as Israel's closest ally, the U.S. has a vital role to play in achieving such peace agreements.

Recognizing this reality, true friends of Israel in Washington have demonstrated courage, vision, and leadership. Their efforts paved the way for historic peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan – treaties that have stood the test of time, delivering security for Israel on two of its borders. Sadly, similar efforts to achieve Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Syrian peace have met with disappointing results. These failures underscore the need for redoubled efforts and creative diplomacy; real support for Israel demands that such efforts not be abandoned, regardless of how difficult the current circumstances or how distant the prospects for peace may appear. As the Iraq Study Group observed in its December 2006 report, "The United States does its ally Israel no favors in avoiding direct involvement to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict."

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support the special relationship and deep ties between the U.S. and Israel;**
- **recognize that real security and prosperity for Israel require a durable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab conflict;**
- **press President Bush to make the achievement of Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace a top U.S. foreign policy priority, supporting and demanding the kind of sustained, credible U.S. leadership necessary to achieve real progress toward resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;**
- **give the Administration the flexibility and resources required to craft and carry out vital foreign policy initiatives in this arena, rejecting cynical attempts by opponents of Israeli-Palestinian peace to erect obstacles to progress; and**
- **support efforts to achieve full membership and participation of Israel in all international forums.**

Need more
information about
this issue?

Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

The *sine qua non* of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is that grievances must be handled only through non-violent means. Violence and terror will not bring the Palestinians any closer to statehood or economic stability and will only guarantee tragic consequences for the Palestinian people. It is the obligation of the Palestinian Authority (PA) to make a 100% effort to stop violence and terror emanating from the areas under its control.

For its part, Israeli actions and policies impact the ability and will of the PA to meet its responsibilities. The only effective antidote to terror is a strong security posture coupled with determined efforts to achieve a negotiated peace. A strong military response to terror – absent any serious effort to resolve the conflict or achieve progress towards its resolution – will be exploited by terrorists to expand their influence and capabilities, escalate violence, and incite anti-U.S. and anti-Israel sentiment and actions. It is noteworthy that in the four years following the breakdown of the peace process in 2000, Israel suffered more casualties from terrorism than it did in the previous 52 years of its existence, and more deaths in that period than in all but two of its wars.

Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin once stated that Israel must “pursue the peace process as if there is no terrorism, and fight terrorism as if there is no peace process.” More recently, former Mossad Director and Knesset Member Danny Yatom wrote in November 2006, “the time has come to internalize the basic truth: There is no way to defeat terror through military means only. Terrorism will be defeated when we utilize diplomatic moves alongside uncompromising war, and time is not playing in Israel's favor...”

In the absence of credible efforts to achieve peace, the void will be filled by the kind of violence that has consumed Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip for more than six years. The establishment of a serious negotiating track and the renewal of effective security cooperation are necessary to extinguish the fires of hatred and violence and deny extremists the ability to re-ignite them in the future.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support all serious efforts by the Administration to help end violence – including efforts to achieve and maintain ceasefires – and return the parties to meaningful negotiations;**
- **support efforts to constitute and strengthen a PA that can work with Israel and the international community and will make a 100% effort to stop terror, and support the resumption and expansion of programs and funding to enable such a PA to maintain order and fight terror; and**
- **reject actions by any party that could prolong the conflict and bloodshed by erecting roadblocks to negotiations or diminishing U.S. influence and flexibility.**

REJECTION OF VIOLENCE AND TERROR

Need more
information about
this issue?

Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

REGIONAL THREATS - IRAQ, IRAN, TERRORIST GROUPS

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not taking place in a regional vacuum. Rather, it has far-reaching consequences for both Israel and U.S. interests in the region and around the world. Resolving the conflict – or at the very least engaging credibly in serious, sustained, and constructive efforts to make progress toward resolving it – represents an important factor in U.S. efforts to confront the most serious challenges emanating from this volatile region. These threats include:

- * the ongoing war in Iraq;
- * the rise of violent extremist organizations, including not only Hamas and Hezbollah, but also al-Qaeda; and
- * the increased influence of Iran in the region and the danger of Iran obtaining nuclear weapons.

In addition, perceptions of the U.S. by many in the region and around the world are disproportionately shaped by developments in the Israeli-Palestinian arena. As articulated by Philip Zelikow, Counselor to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, on September 15, 2006,

“The significance of the Israeli-Arab dispute across these problems is, I think, obvious to all of you...Think then about what is the coalition you need to amass in order to combat those threats...You can imagine the United States, key European allies, the state of Israel and the Arab moderates – Arabs who seek a peaceful future...What would bind that coalition and help keep them together is a sense that the Arab-Israeli issues are being addressed, that they see a common determination to sustain an active policy that tries to deal with the problems of Israel and the Palestinians. We don't want this issue to have the real corrosive effects that it has, or the symbolic corrosive effects that it causes, undermining some of the friends we need to confront the serious dangers we must face together...

“I do not believe that the Palestinian threat, per se, is the most dangerous threat to the future of the state of Israel. If Israel, for example, is especially worried about Iran and sees it is an existential threat, then it's strongly in the interest of Israel to want the American-led coalition to work on an active policy that begins to normalize the situation. It's an essential glue that binds a lot of these problems together. And so ironically, even if your primary concern is not with the Palestinian danger, you have to give it primary attention while you are looking at other problems as well.”

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information about
this issue?

Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

APN urges Members of Congress to recognize the national security implications of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the important role that progress to resolve the conflict could play in mitigating the most serious threats emanating from the region.

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

Annual U.S. military and economic assistance is a key element of U.S. support for Israel. This assistance helps Israel maintain its vital strategic military edge in the region and helps keep Israel strong and secure. It is also a tangible expression and potent symbol of the enduring U.S.-Israel relationship.

Continued robust U.S. assistance for Israel, including special loan guarantee programs to help Israel address extraordinary challenges, sends an important signal of U.S. support for and solidarity with Israel. The longstanding ban on the use of U.S. assistance to support settlement activities—reflecting U.S. recognition that settlements are a threat to Israel's security and viability as a Jewish, democratic state—also sends a valuable signal with respect to red lines in U.S. policy.

U.S. assistance is also vital, in real and symbolic terms, in preparing the ground for any future Israeli-Arab peace agreement. Any peace agreement will require Israel to take serious risks, and it is in no small part the strength of the U.S.-Israel relationship which has provided Israelis the confidence to take such risks thus far. It should be recalled that U.S. assistance for Israel (and Egypt) was a key element of the Camp David Accords, which gave birth to an historic peace agreement that has stood the test of time.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support continued robust U.S. economic and military assistance to Israel, including early disbursement terms and use of a portion of military assistance for in-country expenditures;**
- **reject any calls to cut or condition regular annual U.S. assistance to Israel;**
- **if asked, consider appropriate additional aid for Israel – in the form of new loan guarantees or extensions on current loan guarantees – to address urgent needs, like reconstruction and defense costs related to the summer 2006 Hezbollah-Israel conflict; and**
- **continue to require that no U.S. assistance be used to support settlement activities in the West Bank and demand expanded accountability to ensure that this requirement is met, including reporting on overall Israeli expenditures on settlements.**

AID TO ISRAEL

Need more
information about
this issue?

Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at
202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

AID TO THE PALESTINIANS

U.S. law has long barred direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA), unless the President determines that it is necessary for U.S. national security reasons. This ban has its roots in deep Congressional mistrust of Yasser Arafat. From 1970-2004, the U.S. gave about \$1.2 billion in aid for the West Bank and Gaza. Of this total, \$56 million was provided directly to the PA (\$36 million in 1994, for start-up costs of the new PA; \$20 million in 2003, as a gesture of support for the newly appointed Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas). In November 2004, the Bush Administration wanted to provide \$20 million directly to the PA to support the upcoming Palestinian Presidential elections; as a result of Congressional objections, these funds were eventually paid directly to Israel, rather than to the PA (to pay overdue Palestinian utility bills).

Virtually all U.S. aid for the Palestinians has been provided through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Congress has placed far-reaching limitations and conditions on all such assistance. Following the death of Arafat and the January 2005 election of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Congress placed additional conditions on U.S. assistance to the PA, making U.S. assistance to the Palestinians in the post-Arafat era even more conditioned than when Arafat was in charge.

Aid for the Palestinians came to a virtual halt after the January 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections which brought Hamas – a U.S. designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) – to power, since U.S. law bars giving aid to, or for the benefit of, an FTO. Nonetheless, in June 2006 Congress added more conditions on aid as part of the FY06 Supplemental Appropriations bill. Competing House and Senate legislation to impose additional far-reaching sanctions on the Palestinians was pursued throughout 2006, with the House finally acceding to the Senate's more reasonable version of the bill on December 7, 2006, nearly a year after the Palestinian elections and nearly 6 months after the Senate passed the bill.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support continued and expanded humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians via NGOs and UN agencies;**
- **support indirect assistance, with proper oversight, to a PA that meets international conditions for engagement, in order to help stabilize the political and security situation and to address humanitarian needs;**
- **reinstate the President's long-held authority to waive, for national security reasons, the ban on direct assistance to the PA; and**
- **reject efforts to impose additional sanctions on the Palestinians, bearing in mind that the impact of such sanctions is felt mainly by innocent bystanders—including women, children, and the elderly—and that unintended consequences of sanctions include humanitarian suffering and a political backlash against the U.S., Israel, and moderate elements of Palestinian society.**

Need more information about this issue?

Call APN's Director of Policy & Government Relations, Lara Friedman at 202/728-1893, or send an email to: LFriedman@peacenow.org

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

The issue of Palestinian refugees has been recognized by all parties—including Israel, the Palestinians, and the U.S.—as an integral part of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and one of the key “final status issues” that must be resolved through negotiations. The United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) is the UN body charged with providing humanitarian support for Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Gaza, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon until the issue is resolved.

Looking specifically at the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNRWA has long played a vital role as a source of stability and humanitarian assistance – food, medical care, education – to a population in severe crisis. The continued effective operations of UNRWA – until such time as a permanent and mutually acceptable solution for the Palestinian refugees can be achieved – is vital to the security interests of both the U.S. and Israel, offering the chance for maintaining some degree of stability and helping stave off the outbreak of a wholly-avoidable and potentially catastrophic humanitarian disaster.

Over the years, the U.S. government and U.S. taxpayers, have generously contributed substantial funding to UNRWA. This funding is an investment in the stability of the region and helps ensure that Israel alone will not be forced to shoulder the burden of caring for refugees in the West Bank and Gaza.

It is appropriate for the U.S. to demand accountability and oversight of U.S. funds granted to UNRWA. However, attacks on UNRWA—including demands for unreasonable levels of oversight of operations and programs, efforts to disband or restructure the organization, and demands that an agency that has no security mandate or resources actively fight terrorists—are perceived by many in the Middle East as attempts to disenfranchise refugees and prejudice the outcome of final status negotiations.

Moreover, undermining UNRWA operations in the context of the acute humanitarian needs of the population of the West Bank and Gaza (in the wake of the 2006 Palestinian elections) is wholly inconsistent with the interests and policies of both the U.S. and Israel. It also conflicts with the many statements from Congress and the Administration that the goal of U.S. policy is to pressure Hamas and extremists, not punish the civilian population of the West Bank and Gaza – the majority of which did not vote for Hamas, and the majority of which is under the age of 18.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **reject efforts to undermine and de-legitimize UNRWA; and**
- **support continued U.S. funding of UNRWA, while continuing to demand reasonable oversight and accountability for U.S. taxpayer funds.**

UNRWA

Need more
information about
this issue?

Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

OTHER MIDDLE EAST ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

America's investment in the Middle East helps preserve strategically crucial U.S. military relationships, cooperative arrangements, and access routes. It helps sustain the historic Israel-Egypt peace agreement and the Israel-Jordan relationship, bolsters America's allies in the region, and contributes to the stability of Israel's neighbors and moderate regimes. It also helps mobilize additional aid from governments in the region and around the world and demonstrates America's concern for the humanitarian needs of the people of the region.

America's assistance programs in the Middle East also protect and promote key U.S. interests, including helping to stem the spread of violent religious extremism, block the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, mobilize support for U.S. policy priorities, prevent the destabilization of international oil markets, and stabilize Iraq.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support continued robust U.S. economic and military assistance to Egypt, bearing in mind the vital strategic U.S. and Israeli interest in keeping Egypt strong and promoting strong bilateral relations; the important role that Egypt has played and continues to play in efforts to stabilize Gaza and achieve progress towards Israeli-Palestinian peace; and the very real threats that the Mubarak government faces from its own extremists;**
- **support continued robust U.S. economic and military assistance to Jordan, a key regional partner which has played an important role in both the Israeli-Palestinian track and in Iraq, and which faces very real threats from extremists within its own borders; and**
- **support expanded U.S. economic and military assistance to Lebanon, taking into consideration the lessons learned from the summer 2006 Hezbollah-Israel war, particularly: the importance of maintaining and strengthening moderate leaders; the necessity of empowering the government to meet the needs of its people; the importance of creating a trained, equipped, professional Lebanese Army capable of securing the nation's borders and confronting domestic extremists; and the urgency of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which is critical to Israel's security.**

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information about this
issue?

Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

Every U.S. Administration has opposed settlements, viewing them as a political and security liability for Israel and recognizing them as an impediment to any ongoing or future efforts to achieve a negotiated resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

- ◆ President Ronald Reagan (9/1/82): *“further settlement activity is in no way necessary for the security of Israel and only diminishes the confidence of the Arabs that a final outcome can be freely and fairly negotiated.”*
- ◆ President George H.W. Bush (3/3/90): *“My position is that the foreign policy of the United States says we do not believe there should be new settlements in the West Bank or East Jerusalem.”*
- ◆ Secretary of State James Baker (5/22/91): *“I don’t think there is a bigger obstacle to peace than the settlement activity that continues not only unabated but at an enhanced pace.”*
- ◆ President William J. Clinton (1/7/01): *“...the settlement enterprise and building bypass roads in the heart of what...will one day be part of a Palestinian state is inconsistent with the Oslo commitment that both sides should negotiate a compromise.”*
- ◆ The Mitchell Report (4/20/01): *“...the GOI [Government of Israel] should freeze all settlement activity, including the ‘natural growth’ of existing settlements. The kind of security cooperation desired by the GOI cannot for long co-exist with settlement activity described recently by the European Union as ‘causing great concern’ and by the United States as ‘provocative.’”*
- ◆ President George W. Bush (4/4/02): *“Consistent with the Mitchell Plan, Israeli settlement activity in the occupied territories must stop...”*
- ◆ The Road Map, Stage I (4/30/03): *“GOI immediately dismantles settlement outposts erected since March 2001.”* And *“consistent with the Mitchell Report, GOI freezes all settlement activity (including natural growth of settlements).”*
- ◆ President George W. Bush (3/26/05): *“Israel should not undertake any activity that contravenes road map obligations or prejudice final status negotiations...Therefore, Israel must remove unauthorized outposts and stop settlement expansion.”*
- ◆ State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack (9/7/06): *“[Israel] should not be expanding settlements. There should not be expansion of the settlements and the outposts should be removed.”*
- ◆ Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (11/30/06): *“Israel has obligations under the roadmap and the obligations on settlements are clearly articulated in the roadmap.”*

U.S. POLICY & SETTLEMENTS

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Call APN's Director of Policy & Government Relations, Lara Friedman at 202/728-1893, or send an email to: LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

SETTLEMENTS & OUTPOSTS

The challenges facing Israel are exacerbated by continued settlement growth and continued refusal to rein in settler renegades who persist in establishing and expanding unauthorized settlement “outposts.” Israel’s West Bank security barrier – in theory a justifiable effort to protect Israel from Palestinian attacks by separating Israel from the Palestinians – has been distorted to accommodate settlements, trapping large numbers of Palestinians inside Israel’s line of defense and forcing Israel to defend a de facto “border” that is contorted and unnecessarily long. At the same time, large numbers of Israelis remain outside Israel’s line of defense, forcing the IDF to shift additional resources away from protecting the homefront and dealing with long-term strategic threats, in order to protect those few Israelis who insist on living in the heart of Palestinian populations and in far-flung areas of the West Bank.

In addition, settlements are a drain on Israel’s already beleaguered budget, with continued significant government funding of settlement-related construction, as well as substantial indirect government funding that affords settlers a wide range of income, education, housing, and transportation benefits.

Settlements also represent an existential threat to Israel as a Jewish, democratic state. Israel must either end the settlement enterprise and get out of most of the West Bank, or it will eventually be forced to choose between being Jewish or being democratic, since Jews will be a minority in the area under Israel’s control.

Finally, settlements jeopardize a future negotiated peace agreement and undermine Palestinians who support such an agreement. Most Israeli politicians today—including Likud leaders—acknowledge that some settlements must be removed as part of any final peace agreement. Polls have shown wide support among Israelis for a settlement freeze, removal of outposts, and further settlement evacuations. Polls have also shown that the overwhelming majority of settlers would likely accept compensation and return to Israel in the context of a peace agreement.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **press Israel to end its policy of expanding settlements and to take action against outposts, consistent with its obligations under the Roadmap, its repeated commitments to the United States, and Israeli law;**
- **press the Bush Administration to oppose all settlement construction, including in areas that are likely to remain under Israeli control under some future peace agreement; such construction undermines Palestinian moderates, feeds extremism, and diminishes the chances of achieving a negotiated agreement that could legitimize Israeli claims to those areas; and**
- **ask the Administration to regularly report to Congress on ongoing Israeli settlement activities and the U.S. response (including deductions to available loan guarantees, as required by law).**

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Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

JERUSALEM

Jerusalem is and will forever be the capital of Israel. Any rational policy must also recognize that one-third of Jerusalem's residents are Palestinians, that all Palestinians consider Jerusalem their capital, and that Palestinians have deep political, economic, and religious ties to the city. The emergence of a Palestinian capital in Arab areas of and adjacent to Jerusalem does not undermine Israel's claim to Jerusalem as its capital. Rather, it could clear the way – at long last – for international recognition of Jewish Jerusalem as Israel's eternal capital.

There is nothing sacred about the city's municipal borders, which were redrawn by Israel after the 1967 War to include large areas of the West Bank. Since then, Israel has built Jewish neighborhoods in these areas in order to erase the pre-1967 border and make the city indivisible. As a result, while today Israelis crave separation from the Palestinians, in Jerusalem there is no clear line along which to separate. Thus, the barrier being built in the city – mainly along the municipal borders but in some areas distorted to amputate Palestinian neighborhoods from the city – separates not Israelis from Palestinians, but Palestinians from Palestinians. It is cutting off Jerusalem's Palestinians from schools, jobs, medical care, and other services, and disrupting centuries-old patterns of life. In doing so, it risks radicalizing a population that has traditionally eschewed violence and destabilizing the city.

For the sake of Israel's security and stability, a formula must be found to share Jerusalem between Israelis and Palestinians, and between Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Pragmatic, creative solutions exist to satisfy competing claims to Jerusalem and its holy sites; what is needed is the leadership, courage, and goodwill to explore them.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **reject statements and actions that seek to pre-empt future Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on the issue of Jerusalem;**
- **recognize that security in and the stability of Jerusalem are linked to the welfare of all of its inhabitants;**
- **support access to Jerusalem for all religions and respect for the delicate status quo regarding holy sites; and**
- **reject efforts to force the transfer of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem outside the context of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations — a move that could have broad destabilizing effects, threatening Israel's security, hurting U.S. interests and strategic relationships in the region, and compromising America's position as a mediator in future Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.**

Need more
information about
this issue?

Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

THE SECURITY BARRIER

After years of unrelenting violence, including horrific suicide bombings inside Israel, Israelis justifiably demanded a barrier between Israel and the West Bank. The issue should not be whether Israel has the right to build a barrier – it certainly does – but where that barrier should be built. A barrier built in the right location (i.e., along the 1967 border) could improve both Israeli security and the prospects for peace, making it more difficult for extremists to use violence to destroy any renewed peace efforts.

However, the barrier that is being built today penetrates deep inside the West Bank in order to annex settlers and settlement blocs. Such a route is unsound from a security perspective, extending the barrier's length and increasing the number of vulnerable points. It is more costly to build, requires more soldiers to patrol it, and increases the number of Palestinians swept inside Israel's line of defense. It fuels both Palestinian and international outrage and has led to condemnation of what would otherwise be recognized as a legitimate security initiative. It also undermines Palestinian moderates, empowering violent extremists who have long argued that Palestinian moderates and their negotiations with Israel have delivered no real benefits to the Palestinian people.

The Road Map, which was accepted by Israel and remains the touchstone for the Bush Administration's policy vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, explicitly requires Israel to take "no actions undermining trust, including...confiscation and/or demolition of Palestinian homes and property..." Seizing land deep inside the West Bank for the construction of the security barrier clearly conflicts with this commitment.

Israel's Supreme Court has recognized some of the problems inherent in the route of the barrier in several landmark rulings, requiring the route to be altered to take into account disproportionate hardships inflicted on the Palestinians. In one notable case, the Court explicitly recognized that settler needs, rather than Israel's security, had been the deciding factor in determining the route in a specific area.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support Israel's right to self-defense; and**
- **urge the Administration to press Israel to revise the route of the security barrier so that it protects Israel, does not undermine the prospects for peace, and does not subvert the interests of the majority of Israelis for the sake of the settlers.**

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Call APN's Director of Policy & Government Relations, Lara Friedman at 202/728-1893, or send an email to: LFriedman@peacenow.org

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

The Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967 gave birth to a population of Palestinian refugees – men, women, and children who lost their land, homes and livelihoods in the land which is now Israel.

The refugee issue is at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Morally, a resolution of this human tragedy must be one of the most important goals of the peace process. Politically and strategically, any effort to resolve the conflict without addressing the needs and grievances of these refugees will almost certainly fail, sowing even deeper frustration and hopelessness and creating fertile ground for the growth of future protest and violence. Moreover, the issue has wider impacts, effecting the stability and security of countries of the region that are home to the refugee populations and providing a powerful point around which extremists rally support.

Since the outset of Israeli-Palestinian relations and the birth of the peace process, it has been clear that any solution to the refugee issue will have to be found within the borders of a future Palestinian state, rather than inside Israel. Indeed, while refusal to relinquish the principle of a “right of return” is the prerogative of the Palestinians, demands that the principle be implemented inside Israel are tantamount to a demand that Israel cease to exist as a Jewish state.

Successive peace initiatives – including the Clinton parameters, the Geneva Initiative, and the Arab League Initiative – all make clear that a solution to the issue must be found that is acceptable to both sides – respecting both the sensitivities of the Palestinian refugees and Israel’s sovereign right to determine who may live within its borders.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support efforts to restart a political process that can lead to resolution of all issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including refugees;**
- **reject actions that seek to prejudice the outcome of final status negotiations on this issue, bearing in mind the broad acceptance that has already been achieved, informally, of the notion that any solution to the refugee problem will have to be found inside a Palestinian state, rather than inside Israel;**
- **recognize the existence, too, of claims by Jewish refugees from Arab countries, bearing in mind that resolution of such claims is not an Israeli-Palestinian issue, but rather a bilateral issue between Israel and the countries these Jews fled—it therefore must be dealt with in the context of normalization of ties between Israel and the Arab world; and**
- **reject efforts to make resolution of claims by Jewish refugees from Arab countries an obstacle in the path of Israeli-Palestinian peace or to hold Palestinian refugees hostage to this issue.**

REFUGEES

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information about
this issue?

Call APN’s
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

INCITEMENT & HATE

Anti-Israel and anti-Jewish rhetoric remain serious problems in the state-run press, textbooks, mosque sermons, and official statements of the Palestinians and countries throughout the Middle East. Unfortunately, this is the case even in countries that have strong relations with the U.S. and countries that have signed peace agreements with Israel.

Incitement against Israel and the Jewish people is an extremely serious problem that must not be ignored or dismissed, particularly in light of the Jewish people's painful history. It plants the seeds of hatred in successive generations and helps cultivate a culture of intolerance toward Israel and Jews – a culture that threatens the success of any future peace initiatives. Combating this problem must be an important element of U.S. bilateral relations and regional policy in the Middle East.

In addition, anti-Arab and anti-Muslim rhetoric must also be rejected. A fundamental tenet of democracy is that discrimination and incitement against people based on their religion or ethnicity is unacceptable, and neither acts by extremists nor profound political disagreements change this.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **condemn and reject anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incitement emanating from the Arab world, including from friends and allies of the United States;**
- **condemn and reject anti-Arab and anti-Muslim incitement, keeping in mind that a double standard by the U.S. when it comes to racist speech will only strengthen extremists;**
- **encourage efforts to build tolerance and understanding, and urge the Administration to support the re-constituting of a high-level multilateral anti-incitement committee to monitor and report on incitement and progress in combating it; and**
- **support the fight against anti-Jewish and anti-Israel incitement in the UN and other international forums.**

Need more information about this issue?

Call APN's Director of Policy & Government Relations, Lara Friedman at 202/728-1893, or send an email to: LFriedman@peacenow.org

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

In 1978, Israel and Egypt signed the Camp David Accords, ensuring stability and security on Israel's southern border for more than a quarter of a century and opening the way for diplomatic, security, and economic cooperation. In 1994, Israel and Jordan signed a peace agreement, ensuring the stability and security of the Israeli-Jordanian border and of the Israeli-controlled eastern border between the West Bank and Jordan, and paving the way for diplomatic relations, economic ties, and water-sharing agreements. These agreements came as the result of courageous and visionary leadership in all three countries. In the years since these agreements, both Jordan and Egypt have played a key role in efforts to stop violence and resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as to support other key U.S. policy priorities in the region.

The enduring nature of these peace agreements, even under the strain of the current crises in the region, demonstrates that peace agreements based on mutual interests can succeed.

As Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs C. David Welch testified before Congress on May 17, 2006:

"Our strategic partnership with Egypt is in many ways a cornerstone of our foreign policy in the Middle East. The United States and Egypt share a common vision of a Middle East that is at peace and free from the scourge of terror...We have looked to Egypt as regional leader on the issue of relations with Israel and the Palestinians and they have not let us down...Egypt has demonstrated leadership on other regional issues – from their IAEA Board of Governors' vote to report Iran to the UN Security Council for its non-compliance with its international obligations to President Mubarak's personal efforts to hold the Syrian regime responsible for its destabilizing behavior. We welcomed Egypt's early endorsement of the May 5 Abuja agreement, which was a significant step forward in ending the genocide in Darfur, and Egypt's public commitment to providing troops to future peacekeeping missions there...With a new generation of leadership preparing to emerge in Egypt, it is critical to U.S. interests and to the lives of ordinary Egyptians, that the United States remain fully engaged in this crucial partnership."

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support strong U.S. relations with Israel's courageous partners in peace - Jordan and Egypt;**
- **press Egypt to exert a 100% effort to stop smuggling into the Gaza Strip and to help make progress toward Israeli-Arab peace; and**
- **resist actions that will undermine these key relationships, bearing in mind that responsible management and oversight over U.S. assistance programs should not disregard the importance and historical context of these key bilateral relationships.**

EGYPT & JORDAN

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Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

SAUDI ARABIA & OTHER REGIONAL PARTNERS

Regional partners in peace are a key to Israel's security and to regional stability. As the bipartisan Iraq Study Group pointed out, "...all key issues in the Middle East—the Arab-Israeli conflict, Iraq, Iran, the need for political and economic reforms, and extremism and terror—are inextricably linked."

As Philip Zelikow, Counselor to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, stated clearly at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy on September 15, 2006: "...For the Arab moderates and for the Europeans, some sense of progress and momentum on the Arab-Israeli dispute is just a sine qua non for their ability to cooperate actively with the United States on a lot of other things that we care about. We can rail against that belief; we can find it completely justifiable, but it's fact. That means an active policy on the Arab-Israeli dispute is an essential ingredient to forging a coalition that deals with the most dangerous problems."

Israel and the moderate regimes of the Middle East share both interests and threats. Namely, they want prosperity and stability for their citizens, and they are threatened by the rising tide of religious extremism. They also share serious concerns about the growing influence of Iran in the region and the dangers of Iran obtaining nuclear weapons capability.

In 2002, Saudi Arabia offered a comprehensive peace plan for Israel, Syria, and the Palestinians – including full normalization of relations between Israel and the Arab world. This plan was subsequently adopted by the Arab League, but at the time it was largely ignored by Israel, the United States, and the international community. As a result of the summer 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah – a war which raised awareness in the region of the dangers of the status quo – this important initiative is belatedly the focus of serious discussion and debate both inside and outside Israel.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support and promote efforts to make common cause between Israel and moderate regimes of the region in the face of growing violent religious extremism and Iranian influence;**
- **recognize that achieving progress toward Israeli-Palestinian peace can strengthen moderate regimes in the region and deny extremists a potent rallying point; and**
- **welcome and take seriously initiatives offered by Arab states that reflect a sincere willingness to pursue peace and normalize relations with Israel, bearing in mind that Israel and the U.S. are not required to agree with every element of an initiative in order to recognize it as a valuable opportunity for constructive discussions and potentially productive negotiations.**

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Relations,
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CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

In 2000 Israel unilaterally withdrew its troops from Lebanon, fulfilling its responsibilities under UN Resolution 425. Since then, Lebanon and Syria failed to prevent cross-border attacks against Israel, Lebanon failed to restore government control in the border area, and the U.S. and the rest of the world remained disengaged. The result was the summer 2006 war – a war that was, arguably, both predictable and preventable, and inflicted heavy damage and suffering on both Israel and Lebanon.

The 2006 war put Syria back on the agenda for Israel and the U.S., with many arguing that it is time to re-engage with Syria to try to change that regime's behavior and achieve a peace agreement. This view reflects the realization that the long-simmering Israel-Syria conflict has given Syria an incentive to aid Hezbollah in Lebanon and align itself with Iran. As the Iraq Study Group noted, "Although the U.S.-Syrian relationship is at a low point, both countries have important interests in the region that could be enhanced if they were able to establish some common ground on how to move forward. This approach worked effectively in the early 1990s. In this context, Syria's national interests in the Arab-Israeli dispute are important and can be brought into play..."

There are some who view the Syrian regime as irredeemable and favor efforts to change the regime, rather than change the regime's behavior. This is a dangerous approach, ignoring the possibility of both failure and unintended consequences. While there are no doubt legitimate concerns about Syria's activities and criticisms of the Syrian regime, Syria is a key player with respect to stability in the region and Israeli security; U.S. engagement can help determine whether the role Syria plays in the future will be positive or negative. Significant progress in negotiating an end to the conflict was achieved under Prime Minister Barak, bolstering the argument that there is a real chance for an agreement, if there is the political will to pursue one.

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **support any initiative to open Israeli-Syrian peace talks, recognizing that any future peace agreement will require a compromise on the Golan Heights;**
- **reject any efforts to place preconditions on negotiations, preempt U.S. options for supporting negotiations, or block U.S. support for an agreement that such negotiations may produce;**
- **press the Bush Administration to actively engage to calm the growing tensions in Lebanon – including sending a high-level U.S. envoy to Beirut, empowered to speak to all relevant parties – and support U.S. assistance to help strengthen the government of Lebanon and its armed forces; and**
- **press Syria to help achieve the release of captured Israeli soldiers, expel terrorist organizations from its territory and end its support for Hezbollah.**

SYRIA & LEBANON

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Call APN's
Director of Policy &
Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

AMERICANS FOR PEACE NOW

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP:

EXCERPTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE BIPARTISAN BAKER-HAMILTON COMMISSION, WITH RESPECT TO ISRAEL, THE PALESTINIANS, SYRIA, AND MIDDLE EAST PEACE

RECOMMENDATION 1: The United States...should launch the comprehensive New Diplomatic Offensive to deal with the problems of Iraq and of the region. This new diplomatic offensive should be launched before December 31, 2006.

RECOMMENDATION 4: As an instrument of the New Diplomatic Offensive, an Iraq International Support Group should be organized immediately following the launch of the New Diplomatic Offensive.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Under the aegis of the New Diplomatic Offensive and the Support Group, the United States should engage directly with Iran and Syria in order to try to obtain their commitment to constructive policies toward Iraq and other regional issues. In engaging Syria and Iran, the United States should consider incentives, as well as disincentives, in seeking constructive results.

RECOMMENDATION 13: There must be a renewed and sustained commitment by the United States to a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace on all fronts: Lebanon and Syria, and President Bush's June 2002 commitment to a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine.

RECOMMENDATION 14: This effort should include—as soon as possible—the unconditional calling and holding of meetings, under the auspices of the United States or the Quartet (i.e., the United States, Russia, European Union, and the United Nations), between Israel and Lebanon and Syria on the one hand, and Israel and Palestinians (who acknowledge Israel's right to exist) on the other. The purpose of these meetings would be to negotiate peace as was done at the Madrid Conference in 1991, and on two separate tracks—one Syrian/Lebanese, and the other Palestinian.

RECOMMENDATION 15: Concerning Syria, some elements of that negotiated peace should be:

- * Syria's full adherence to UN Security Council Resolution 1701 of August 2006, which provides the framework for Lebanon to regain sovereign control over its territory.*
- * Syria's full cooperation with all investigations into political assassinations in Lebanon, especially those of Rafik Hariri and Pierre Gemayel.*
- * A verifiable cessation of Syrian aid to Hezbollah and the use of Syrian territory for transshipment of Iranian weapons and aid to Hezbollah. (This step would do much to solve Israel's problem with Hezbollah.)*
- * Syria's use of its influence with Hamas and Hezbollah for the release of the captured Israeli Defense Force soldiers.*
- * A verifiable cessation of Syrian efforts to undermine the democratically elected government of Lebanon.*
- * A verifiable cessation of arms shipments from or transiting through Syria for Hamas and other radical Palestinian groups.*
- * A Syrian commitment to help obtain from Hamas an acknowledgment of Israel's right to exist.*

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Government
Relations,
Lara Friedman
at 202/728-1893,
or send an email to:
LFriedman@peacenow.org

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING - 110TH CONGRESS

RECOMMENDATION 16: In exchange for these actions and in the context of a full and secure peace agreement, the Israelis should return the Golan Heights, with a U.S. security guarantee for Israel that could include an international force on the border, including U.S. troops if requested by both parties.

RECOMMENDATION 17: Concerning the Palestinian issue, elements of that negotiated peace should include:

- * *Adherence to UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and to the principle of land for peace, which are the only bases for achieving peace.*
- * *Strong support for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian Authority to take the lead in preparing the way for negotiations with Israel.*
- * *A major effort to move from the current hostilities by consolidating the cease-fire reached between the Palestinians and the Israelis in November 2006.*
- * *Support for a Palestinian national unity government.*
- * *Sustainable negotiations leading to a final peace settlement along the lines of President Bush's two-state solution, which would address the key final status issues of borders, settlements, Jerusalem, the right of return, and the end of conflict.*

APN urges Members of Congress to:

- **reject any "linkage" that blames the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for all ills in the region, or that suggests that solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would resolve all such ills;**
- **reject, at the same time, the view that linking progress toward Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace with other policy challenges in the Middle East is tantamount to an attack on Israel or a pretext for anti-Israel policies, bearing in mind that the achievement of peace is a valid and crucial goal, in and of itself, for the sake of both the U.S. and Israel;**
- **recognize that progress on the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab tracks will bolster other key U.S. efforts in the region, including efforts to stabilize Iraq, counter the rise of religious extremism, stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and protect vital energy resources and transportation routes; and**
- **mobilize support in Congress for policies that are consistent with the achievement of progress toward Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace, like those laid out in the recommendations of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group.**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP:

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Relations,
Lara Friedman
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or send an email to:
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Americans for Peace Now is a national grassroots organization of American Jewish Zionists committed to peace and security for Israel.

For further information about any topic covered in this Congressional Briefing or any other matters related to the quest for peace and security in the Middle East, please contact:

Director of Policy and Government Relations Lara Friedman
(LFriedman@peacenow.org)

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apndc@peacenow.org

National Headquarters

1101 14th Street NW
6th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
tel: (202) 728-1893
fax: (202) 728-1895
apndc@peacenow.org

New York Office

114 West 26th Street
Suite 1000
New York, NY 10001

APN Online

<http://www.peacenow.org>

Los Angeles Office

5870 Olympic Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
tel: (323) 934-3480
fax: (323) 934-3550

