

Congressman Rothman: U.S.-Israel Relationship is Deep and Ironclad

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CONTACT: Aaron Keyak

office: (202) 225-5061

cell: (202) 905-6361

email: aaron.keyak@mail.house.gov

Washington, DC –

Today, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ), a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittees on Defense; and State and Foreign Operations, released the following statement:

The United States Congress expressed its overwhelming commitment to the Jewish State of Israel, its support for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's efforts for peace with the Palestinians, and the strength of the U.S.-Israel relationship when they gave him numerous standing ovations and thunderous approving applause. The Prime Minister spoke eloquently of the strong security and military cooperation between the U.S. and Israel, the shared values between our two great nations, and the sacrifices that will need to be made for peace.

Prime Minister Netanyahu reiterated to the world that what still stands in the way of a two state solution isn't the specific details of the future borders of the two states as much as the steadfast refusal by the Palestinian government, since 1948, to recognize the Jewish State of Israel's existence.

As the Prime Minister said, "It is time for President Abbas to stand before his people and say 'I will accept a Jewish state.' Those six words will change history. They will make clear to the Palestinians that this conflict must come to an end. That they are not building a state to continue the conflict with Israel, but to end it." The enthusiastic applause by the U.S. Congress that welcomed these remarks reflect the vision we share with the Prime Minister on this issue.

Furthermore, despite some efforts to exploit the support for the U.S.-Israel relationship for partisan gain, it has become crystal clear that President Obama and Prime Minister Netanyahu agree on one important detail to any future two state solution: a return to the 1967 lines will be indefensible for the Jewish State of Israel and hurtful to America's interests in the region.

The United States will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with Israel in fighting terrorists and those forces seeking to destroy our democratic societies. As President Obama recently reiterated to the entire world, including the 22 Arab countries that surround Israel, the United States has an unshakable commitment to the safety and security of the Jewish State of Israel. I agree with the President that the United

Nations is not the place to negotiate the final parameters of peace between the Israelis and Palestinians, and that Israel should not be forced to talk with parties, such as Hamas, that don't recognize its right to exist and seek to drive it into the sea. We also join Israel in demanding the return of Gilad Shalit and continue the unprecedented cooperation on joint U.S.-Israel missile defense programs.

Today, friends and enemies of Israel and the United States were reminded that the bond between our countries, our security interests, our values, and our people is deep and ironclad.

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