

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY TRAINING & LOBBY DAY



WASHINGTON DC
MARCH 7 - 8, 2010



CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION PACKET

POLICY ASKS

Information and documents to leave at your congressional offices

A PROGRAM OF INTERFAITH PEACE-BUILDERS AND THE U.S. CAMPAIGN TO END THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION
MORE INFORMATION AT WWW.IFPB.ORG/GRASSROOTS
office@ifpb.org • 202.244.0821 • www.ifpb.org

Interfaith Peace-Builders/US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation Grassroots Lobbying Day “Talking Points” | March 8, 2010

1. FY2011 Budget Request for Military Aid to Israel

* Earlier this year President Obama sent his FY2011 budget request to Congress, which included a record-breaking \$3 billion in military aid to Israel, after declaring in his State of the Union address that he would "go through the budget line by line to eliminate programs that we can't afford and don't work."

* The United States cannot afford military aid to Israel. Before your meetings, please look at <http://www.aidtoisrael.org> to determine how much military aid to Israel your state and Congressional district will be providing under the terms of a 2007 agreement between the United States and Israel, and what that money could have funded instead to promote affordable housing, green jobs training, education programs, and health care access. Bring this data to your meetings and share them with Congressional offices to show that military aid to Israel comes at a price that we can't afford.

* Military aid to Israel doesn't work to promote a just and lasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis. In fact, it does the opposite, by literally “fueling” the conflict as documented in a 2009 Amnesty International report. Israel routinely misuses U.S. weapons in violation of the Arms Export Control Act to commit human rights abuses against Palestinians and to maintain its illegal military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. These U.S. weapons were misused by Israel to commit violations of human rights and international law, war crimes, and possible crimes against humanity before, during, and after “Operation Cast Lead,” according to the UN-backed Goldstone Report. During the Bush Administration, Israel killed more than 3,000 innocent Palestinians, according to the Israeli human rights organization B'tselem, often with U.S. weapons.

* Since the United States cannot afford military aid to Israel and since Israel routinely misuses U.S. weapons in violation of U.S. law, U.S. military aid to Israel should be cut off. As a first step towards that, **ask your Members of Congress** to offer amendments to the budget to restrict and condition military aid to Israel to prevent U.S. weapons from being misused, as detailed in the memo.

2. AECA Letter to Secretary of State Clinton

* When a country misuses U.S. weapons in violation of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), the State Department is obligated by law to open an investigation and report its finding of violations of this law to Congress. Despite killing more than 3,000 Palestinian civilians during the Bush Administration, the State Department has not publicly reported to Congress any Israeli violations of this law.

* Members of Congress have a responsibility to insure that the laws they pass are followed. **Ask your Members of Congress** to send Secretary of State Clinton a letter asking for the State Department to investigate Israel's possible violations of the AECA.

3. Resolution on Israel's Blockade of the Gaza Strip

* Israel's blockade of the occupied Palestinian Gaza Strip is an illegal act of collective punishment, as detailed by the UN-backed Goldstone Report. According to the 4th Geneva Convention, to which both Israel and the United States are signatories, people cannot be collectively punished for a crime they did not commit. This is exactly what Israel's blockade is doing to the 1.5 million Palestinian residents of the occupied Gaza Strip, who are being denied by Israel adequate provisions of food, clean water, sanitation, electricity, medicines, and other essentials.

* Members of Congress need to support the Obama Administration in its efforts to end the blockade of the Gaza Strip. On January 22, 2009, President Obama stated “Our hearts go out to Palestinian civilians who are in need of immediate food, clean water, and basic medical care, and who've faced suffocating poverty for far too long. Now we must extend a hand of opportunity to those who seek peace. As part of a lasting cease-fire, Gaza's border crossings should be open to allow the flow of aid and commerce.” More than a year later, even though the cease-fire between Israel and Hamas has more or less held, Israel maintains its illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip in defiance of the Obama Administration's policy statement.

* **Ask your Members of Congress** to help the Obama Administration achieve its policy goal of ending Israel's illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip by introducing a resolution to that effect.

ASK: THE SIEGE OF GAZA

DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR AN END TO GAZA BLOCKADE:

*Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Israel should end its siege of the occupied Gaza Strip.
(Introduced in House)*

HRES _____

**111th CONGRESS
2nd Session
H. RES. _____**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Israel should end its siege of the occupied Gaza Strip.

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January ____, 2010**

Mr./Ms. ____ (for himself/herself, _____) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Israel should end its siege of the occupied Gaza Strip.

Whereas Israel has held the Palestinian Gaza Strip in belligerent military occupation since June 1967;

Whereas Israel, as the Occupying Power, has internationally-binding obligations to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip living as protected persons under military occupation, according to the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention);

Whereas both Israel and the United States are High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention;

Whereas Article 1 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states “The High Contracting Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances.”;

Whereas Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states “No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited.”;

Whereas Article 55 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states “the Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring the food and medical supplies of the population; it should, in particular, bring in the necessary foodstuffs, medical stores and other articles if the resources of the occupied territory are inadequate.”;

Whereas Article 56 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that the “Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring and maintaining, with the cooperation of national and local authorities, the medical and hospital establishments and services, public health and hygiene in the occupied territory”;

Whereas Article 59 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states “If the whole or part of the population of an occupied territory is inadequately supplied, the Occupying Power shall agree to relief schemes on behalf of the said population, and shall facilitate them by all the means at its disposal. Such schemes, which may be undertaken either by States or by impartial humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, shall consist, in particular, of the provision of consignments of foodstuffs, medical supplies and clothing. All Contracting Parties shall permit the free passage of these consignments and shall guarantee their protection.”;

Whereas on November 15, 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice facilitated an Agreement on Movement and Access between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, in which the parties agreed that crossing points to and from the Gaza Strip “will operate continuously” and that “Israel will allow the passage of convoys to facilitate the movements of goods and persons” between the Gaza Strip and West Bank;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1860, adopted on January 8, 2009, calls for the “unimpeded provision and distribution throughout Gaza of humanitarian assistance, including of food, fuel and medical treatment”;

Whereas President Barack Obama stated on January 22, 2009 “Our hearts go out to Palestinian civilians who are in need of immediate food, clean water, and basic medical care, and who've faced suffocating poverty for far too long. Now we must extend a hand of opportunity to those who seek peace. As part of a lasting cease-fire, Gaza's border crossings should be open to allow the flow of aid and commerce.”

Whereas in January 2009, Israel rejected for delivery to the Gaza Strip an unspecified number of cans of meat, humus, peas, white beans, beans, and tuna; 30,000 metric tons of corn oil; and 50,000 metric tons of rice; [Source: www.logcluster.org/gaza09a/supply-chain/clearance-status-of-humanitarian-cargo/list_090331.pdf/view]

Whereas in March 2009, Israel rejected for delivery to the Gaza Strip 125 metric tons of flour; 90 metric tons of macaroni; and 150 pallets of tomato paste, white tahine and jam from the U.S. Agency for International Development; [Source: Same as above and www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_humanitarian_situation_report_2009_03_30_english.pdf]

Whereas the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported in its Field Update on Gaza from the Humanitarian Coordination, 24-30 March 2009 that “In addition to limitations on humanitarian deliveries, restrictions on imports and exports in general continue to seriously affect the living conditions of the population...Movement restrictions continue to prevent herders and farmers from accessing areas near the borders. Fishermen stand to lose substantial income as a result of new restrictions that limit fishing to three miles from Gaza's shores.”;

Whereas in May 2009, the U.S. Department of State sent a diplomatic note to Israel urging it to open the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, to allow for the access of food and medicine and transfer of money to banks, and for the importation of construction and rebuilding materials;

Whereas on June 30, 2009, the Israeli navy committed an international act of piracy by kidnapping in international waters 21 people, including U.S. citizens and a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives, who were attempting to break Israel's siege of the Gaza Strip and deliver badly-needed humanitarian supplies to the besieged population;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

- (1) urges Israel to comply unconditionally with its legal obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention to supply all protected persons in the occupied Gaza Strip with all humanitarian necessities;
- (2) finds that Israel's siege of the Gaza Strip constitutes an act of collective punishment that is illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention;
- (3) urges Israel to comply unconditionally with its obligations agreed to as part of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access;
- (4) urges Israel to implement unconditionally the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1860;
- (5) commends President Barack Obama for stating that Gaza's borders should remain open for aid and commerce and urges him to communicate to Israel that Gaza's borders should be opened immediately;
- (6) urges Israel to end immediately its land, sea, and air siege of the Gaza Strip.

Attest:

Clerk.

MCDERMOTT ELLISON LETTER ON HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO GAZA

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

Thank you for your ongoing work to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and for your commitment of \$300 million in U.S. aid to rebuild the Gaza Strip. We write to you with great concern about the ongoing crisis in Gaza.

The people of Gaza have suffered enormously since the blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt following Hamas' coup, and particularly following Operation Cast Lead. We also sympathize deeply with the people of southern Israel who have suffered from abhorrent rocket and mortar attacks. We recognize that the Israeli government has imposed restrictions on Gaza out of a legitimate and keenly felt fear of continued terrorist action by Hamas and other militant groups. This concern must be addressed without resulting in the de facto collective punishment of the Palestinian residents of the Gaza Strip. Truly, fulfilling the needs of civilians in Israel and Gaza are mutually reinforcing goals.

The unabated suffering of Gazan civilians highlights the urgency of reaching a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and we ask you to press for immediate relief for the citizens of Gaza as an urgent component of your broader Middle East peace efforts. The current blockade has severely impeded the ability of aid agencies to do their work to relieve suffering, and we ask that you advocate for immediate improvements for Gaza in the following areas:

- * Movement of people, especially students, the ill, aid workers, journalists, and those with family concerns, into and out of Gaza;
- * Access to clean water, including water infrastructure materials,
- * Access to plentiful and varied food and agricultural materials;
- * Access to medicine and health care products and suppliers;
- * Access to sanitation supplies, including sanitation infrastructure materials;
- * Access to construction materials for repairs and rebuilding;
- * Access to fuel;
- * Access to spare parts;
- * Prompt passage into and out of Gaza for commercial and agricultural goods; and
- * Publication and review of the list of items prohibited to the people of Gaza.

Winter is arriving and the needs of the people grow ever more pressing. For example, the ban on building materials is preventing the reconstruction of thousands of innocent families' damaged homes. There is also a concern that unrepaired sewage treatment plants will overflow and damage surrounding property and water resources.

Despite ad hoc easing of the blockade, there has been no significant improvement in the quantity and scope of goods allowed into Gaza. Both the number of trucks entering Gaza per month and the number of days the crossings have been open have declined since March. This crisis has devastated livelihoods, entrenched a poverty rate of over 70%, increased dependence on erratic international aid, allowed the deterioration of public infrastructure, and led to the marked decline of the accessibility of essential services.

The humanitarian and political consequences of a continued near-blockade would be disastrous. Easing the blockade on Gaza will not only improve the conditions on the ground for Gaza's civilian population, but will also undermine the tunnel economy which has strengthened Hamas. Under current conditions, our aid remains little more than an unrealized pledge. Most importantly, lifting these restrictions will give civilians in Gaza a tangible sense that diplomacy can be an effective tool for bettering their conditions.

Your Administration's overarching Middle East peace efforts will benefit Israel, the Palestinians, and the entire region. The people of Gaza, along with all the peoples of the region, must see that the United States is dedicated to addressing the legitimate security needs of the State of Israel and to ensuring that the legitimate needs of the Palestinian population are met.

Sincerely,
Members of Congress

Arizona
Raul Grijalva

California
Lois Capps
Sam Farr
Bob Filner
Barbara Lee
Loretta Sanchez
Pete Stark
Michael Honda
Lynn Woolsey
Jackie Speier
Diane Watson
George Miller

Connecticut
Jim Himes

Indiana
Andre Carson

Iowa
Bruce Braley

Kentucky
John Yarmuth

Maryland
Elijah Cummings
Donna Edwards

Massachusetts
Michael Capuano
William Delahunt
Jim McGovern
John Tierney
John Olver
Stephen Lynch

Michigan
John Conyers
John Dingell
Carolyn Kilpatrick

Minnesota
Keith Ellison
Betty McCollum
James Oberstar

New Jersey
Donald Payne
Rush Holt
Bill Pascrell

New York
Yvette Clarke
Maurice Hinchey
Paul Tonko
Eric Massa

North Carolina
David Price

Ohio
Mary Jo Kilroy
Marcy Kaptur

Oregon
Earl Blumenauer
Peter DeFazio

Pennsylvania
Chaka Fattah
Joe Sestak

Vermont
Peter Welch

Virginia
Jim Moran
Glenn Nye

Washington
Jim McDermott
Adam Smith
Jay Inslee
Brian Baird

West Virginia
Nick Rahall

Wisconsin
Tammy Baldwin
Gwen Moore

ASK: MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL

CONGRESSIONAL LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE:

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

January 2010

Dear Secretary Clinton,

This month President Obama is expected to submit to Congress his FY2011 budget request, which is scheduled to include \$3 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Israel, according to the terms of a 2007 U.S.-Israeli Memorandum of Understanding.

As you know, all foreign aid recipients are required to abide by the terms and limitations on the use of U.S. weapons found in the Arms Export Control Act. According to this law, U.S. weapons can be used only to support "internal security" and "legitimate self-defense."

I am writing because I am concerned that Israel may have violated the terms of the Arms Export Control Act by misusing weapons during "Operation Cast Lead" in particular, and throughout the years of the Bush Administration in general.

According to *B'Tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories*, between January 2001-November 2008, Israel killed 2,086 Palestinian civilians who took no part in hostilities, including 723 children under age 18. During "Operation Cast Lead," which took place between December 2008-January 2009, according to B'Tselem, Israel killed at least 1,021 Palestinian non-combatants.

I am writing to request the State Department to undertake a thorough, comprehensive review of Israel's possible violations of the Arms Export Control Act during the Bush Administration and to make the results of this investigation public and deliver it to Congress prior to its deliberation on the President's FY2011 budget request for military aid to Israel.

I look forward to hearing back from your Department about my request.

Sincerely yours,

Member of Congress



US Campaign to
End the Israeli Occupation

"We aim to change those US policies that both sustain Israel's 41-year occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, and deny equal rights for all."

Leveraging FY2011 Budget Request for Military Aid to Israel to Achieve U.S. Policy Goals

1. Background

In August 2007, the United States and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to increase U.S. military aid to Israel by an annual average of 25% over previous levels of assistance, totaling \$30 billion between FY2009-2018.

In January 2010, President Obama is expected to request \$3 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Israel in his FY2011 budget, the third budgetary allocation under the terms of the MOU.

In previous years, Congress has approved annual military aid appropriations to Israel without any strings attached, leading to little or no discernible progress toward stated U.S. policy goals of halting the expansion of Israeli settlements and promoting Israeli-Palestinian peace. This year, Members of Congress should reverse this trend and act to ensure that the FY2011 budget request for military aid to Israel is leveraged in order to achieve stated U.S. policy goals.

2. Possible Amendments for FY2011 Budget

A. Accountability to U.S. Laws Protecting Human Rights

i. Restricting Use of U.S. Weapons to Israel's Sovereign Territory

Data compiled by *B'tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories* shows that between January 2001-November 2008, Israel killed more than 2,000 Palestinian civilians who took no part in hostilities, of whom more than 700 were children. Between December 2008-January 2009, Israel killed more than 1,300 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, more than an estimated half of whom were civilians. Oftentimes, these Palestinian civilians were killed with weapons paid for by and produced in the United States in violation of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA).

To ensure that U.S. weapons are not being used to commit human rights abuses against Palestinian civilians, while at the same time affirming Israel's right to use these weapons for "legitimate self-defense" against an attack by a foreign country or for "internal security" consistent with the terms of the AECA, Congress should state that U.S. weapons should not be used by Israel in its military occupation of the Palestinian Gaza Strip, West Bank, and East Jerusalem.

Precedent for restricting Israel's use of U.S. assistance within its own sovereign borders already exists through the loan guarantee program. In the April 2003 supplemental war appropriation bill authorizing \$9 billion in loan guarantees to Israel, Congress stipulated that these funds can be used "only to support activities in the geographic areas which were subject to the administration of the Government of Israel before June 5, 1967."

Congress should insert the same or similar language as found in the loan guarantee program and extend this principle to Israel's FMF program to ensure that such funds are not being used in violation of the AECA to maintain a foreign military occupation and to commit human rights abuses against an occupied people.

ii. AECA Violations Must Be Investigated before Money Is Appropriated

In January 2009, Rep. Dennis Kucinich requested the State Department to investigate Israel's possible violations of the AECA during "Operation Cast Lead." To date, the State Department has not complied with this request for an investigation. It is not known whether or when the State Department will initiate an investigation.

Members of Congress can take no action against violations of the AECA until the Executive Branch notifies them of a violation. Therefore, to ensure that Congress adheres to the letter and spirit of the AECA, Members of Congress should insert the following language into the FY2011 budget line-item for FMF to Israel:

“No amounts appropriated under this bill shall be disbursed prior to the State Department transmitting to Members of Congress and making public the results of a complete, accurate, and transparent investigation into Israel’s possible violations of the Arms Export Control Act during “Operation Cast Lead,” as previously requested by Congress in January 2009.”

B. Promoting a Freeze on the Expansion of Israeli Settlements

Since 1967, every U.S. Administration has upheld the illegality of Israel’s settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, decried them as obstacles to peace, and urged Israel not to expand settlements. Despite this stance, Israel has continued to build settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. During the Oslo “peace process,” the number of Israeli settlers doubled, and recently Israel announced plans to add 73,000 housing units to existing settlements. If this plan comes to fruition, all hope of establishing a viable and contiguous Palestinian state will be lost.

On numerous occasions, Israel has pledged to halt the expansion of settlement building, most recently in the “road map” and at the Annapolis peace conference, yet these promises have gone unfulfilled. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s recently announced temporary moratorium on new settlement expansion approval in the West Bank neither halts already-approved construction, nor does it apply to occupied East Jerusalem.

Members of Congress should hold Israel to its pledge to halt settlement activities and back the Obama Administration’s positions on settlements by inserting the following language into the FY2011 budget line-item for FMF to Israel:

“Amounts appropriated under this bill shall be disbursed only in quarterly installments after the Administration delivers to Congress a report verifying that during the previous quarter Israel has fulfilled its commitments under the ‘road map’ and Annapolis peace conference to halt the building of new settlements in the Palestinian West Bank and East Jerusalem and to freeze the expansion of existing settlements in these areas, including so-called ‘natural growth’ of these settlements. Israel shall be ineligible to receive a quarterly installment of this appropriation if the President reports that Israel has undertaken any form of settlement expansion during the previous quarter.”

C. Ending the Blockade of the Gaza Strip

Since 2006, Israel has maintained a full-scale land, sea, and air blockade of the occupied Gaza Strip in an illegal act of collective punishment against the 1.5 million Palestinian civilians who reside there. This blockade has led to a dire humanitarian crisis and decimated the economic life of the region.

In January 2009, President Obama declared that “Gaza’s border crossings should be open to allow the flow of aid and commerce.” Members of Congress should support this important policy goal by insisting that no military aid to Israel be disbursed until the blockade is ended and that the borders of the Gaza Strip remain open to humanitarian aid and normal economic activities by inserting the following language into the FY2011 budget line-item for FMF to Israel:

“No amounts appropriated under this bill shall be disbursed prior to the President certifying in a public, written report to Congress that Israel has ended its blockade of the Gaza Strip and that its borders are open to the free flow of humanitarian aid and for all normal economic transactions, including imports and exports of materials, and that all provisions of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access are being implemented. Amounts appropriated under this bill shall be disbursed thereafter only in quarterly installments after the Administration delivers to Congress a report verifying that during the previous quarter Israel has not reestablished its blockade of the Gaza Strip nor violated the terms of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access.”

3. Conclusion

In order to achieve President Obama’s goal of quickly establishing a just and lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace, Members of Congress should incentivize Israel’s behavior toward freezing settlement growth, ending the blockade of the Gaza Strip, and ending the human rights abuses associated with its military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip.

This incentivization should be accomplished by leveraging U.S. influence over Israel through its FMF appropriation. For decades, blank checks to Israel have not succeeded in modifying its behavior toward accomplishing U.S. policy goals of promoting human rights and establishing peace. The continuation of the same policy will bring only the same results. Now is the time for change.

Mr. Eric Thorson, Inspector General
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

March 2010,

Dear Inspector-General Thorson,

We are writing to request an investigation into the activities and finances of 501(c)(3) organizations that promote Israel's military occupation of Palestinian territories.

Reports by news media and independent researchers have made it clear that such organizations transfer tens of millions of dollars every year to Israeli organizations that promote the expansion of settlements, which are considered illegal by the United States government, the United Nations Security Council, and the International Court of Justice.

Although these organizations operate with little accountability, it has become known in at least some cases that their principal activities are not charitable. For example, several news articles report that one of these organizations, American Friends of Ateret Cohanim, is primarily involved in the acquisition of real estate for the purpose of replacing Arab residents of the Old City of Jerusalem with Jewish residents, and that it does not devote any resources to its stated purpose of supporting a religious educational institution in Jerusalem.

In other cases, reports indicate that charitable activity is supplemented by substantial non-charitable activity. For example, the Hebron Fund helped to finance the 17-month occupation by settlers of a Palestinian building in Hebron, in defiance of even the Israeli police and courts. The Hebron Fund spent tens of thousands of dollars just to pay for heating the building in the winter months.

As the above paragraphs indicate, many of the settlement support organizations are involved exclusively or substantially in activities that are not only uncharitable, but which promote results that are the very opposite of charitable. The IRS lists, in its definition of "charitable," the purposes of lessening neighborhood tensions, eliminating prejudice and discrimination, and defending civil and human rights secured by law. Activities such as purchasing houses in Palestine for settlement by Israeli Jews only, financing illegal takeovers of Palestinian-owned buildings, and arming and training paramilitary organizations accomplish the opposites of these purposes.

In addition, it has long been the position of the IRS that racially discriminatory organizations are not charitable. Substantially all of the settlements supported by the organizations in question are exclusively populated by Jewish Israelis, and some have explicitly racially discriminatory policies.

No organization that substantially supports Israeli settlements is eligible for tax exemptions under the standards set out in the Internal Revenue Code and the IRS's rules. In many cases, favorable rulings appear to have been obtained through fraudulent reporting by the organizations, as when these organizations tell the IRS that they operate in Israel when they in fact operate principally or exclusively in the occupied Palestinian territories; or tell the IRS that they are involved in charitable activity, when they are in fact exclusively or substantially involved in non-charitable activity.

The tens of millions of dollars that settlement support organizations receive, tax-free, on a yearly basis represents a loss of millions of dollars to U.S. taxpayers. We request an investigation that would reveal the true amount of this loss to taxpayers; that would enable the U.S. government to recover the funds from these organizations; and that would reveal the nature and extent of the activities supported by these organizations, so that U.S. nonprofit policy can be aligned with U.S. foreign policy.

Sincerely,

Members of Congress

U.S. Military Aid to Israel—Illegal and Immoral

Can You Think of a Better Way to Spend \$30 Billion over the Next Decade?

A BRIEF HISTORY

On August 16, 2007, the United States and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to increase bilateral military aid to Israel to \$30 billion over the next decade, representing a more than 25% increase over the previous FY2008 appropriation.¹

Even before this increase in military aid, Israel was already the largest recipient of U.S. assistance. According to Congressional Research Service, since 1949, the United States has provided Israel with more than \$53 billion of military aid—a little more than half of total aid to Israel, which stood at more than \$101 billion as of 2007.²

Over the past decade, U.S. military aid to Israel increased yearly while economic aid was phased out, implementing a ten-year understanding negotiated between Congress and the government of former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in 1998.³

In FY2008—the last year of this ten-year understanding—the United States provided Israel with an estimated \$2.38 billion in military aid while traditional economic aid—known as Economic Support Funds in budgetary language—was reduced to zero (although the United States continued to provide an estimated \$39.7 million to Israel under a different budget category known as Migration and Refugee Assistance).⁴

In his budget request to Congress for FY2009—the first budget year of the new understanding signed in 2007—President George W. Bush requested \$2.55 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Israel, a 9% increase over actual military aid given to Israel in FY2007.⁵ (FMF is the primary budgetary vehicle through which the United States provides military aid.) Under the terms of the new understanding, annual military aid appropriations to Israel are scheduled to rise to \$3.1 billion by FY2018.⁶

VIOLATIONS OF U.S. LAWS

All U.S. aid programs, whether military or economic, have built-in mechanisms to prevent that aid from being used by countries to commit human rights abuses. According to U.S. law, countries that commit human rights abuses with U.S. aid are to be sanctioned and aid is to be cut off.

The Arms Export Control Act (P.L. 80-829) stipulates that countries purchasing or receiving U.S. weapons cannot use them against civilians and must restrict their usage to “internal security” and “legitimate self-defense.”



The US Campaign and many other organizations have documented Israel's repeated uses of U.S. weapons to commit human rights violations against civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Lebanon. Indeed, Israel could not maintain its illegal 40-year military occupation and siege of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip without these weapons.

According to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (P.L. 87-195), “No assistance may be provided under this part [of the law] to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.” As documented not only by Palestinian, Israeli, and international human rights groups, but by the U.S. government as well, Israel has an atrocious human rights record and therefore should be ineligible for any form of U.S. aid.

TAKE ACTION

* Send a postcard, sign a petition, or write a letter to your Members of Congress and the President opposing military aid to Israel.

* Sign up for an organizing packet to educate and mobilize people in your community on this issue.

* Organize a meeting of constituents with your Members of Congress to oppose military aid to Israel.

* Put a flash graphic on your blog or social networking site opposing military aid to Israel.

* Learn more about U.S. arms laws and transfers of weapons to Israel at the websites of the Federation of American Scientists: www.fas.org and the World Policy Institute: www.worldpolicy.org

More information at:
<http://www.endtheoccupation.org/article.php?list=type&type=208>

ENDNOTES

¹ “Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between Israel and the United States,” August 16, 2007. Available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/About+the+Ministry/MFA+Spokesman/2007/Signing%20of%20Memorandum%20of%20Understanding%20between%20Israel%20and%20the%20United%20States%2016-Aug-2007>.

² Jeremy M. Sharp, Specialist in Middle East Affairs, Congressional Research Service Report, “U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel,” updated January 2, 2008, Table 5. Recent U.S. Aid to Israel, p. 18. Available at: http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL33222_20080102.pdf.

³ Serge Schmemmann, “Israelis to Discuss Phasing Out 1.2 Billion U.S. Economic Aid,” *New York Times*, January 27, 1998. Available at: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E07E6D7113BF934A15752C0A96E958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>.

⁴ “Summary and Highlights: International Affairs Function 150, Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Request,” U.S. Department of State. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/100014.pdf>

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

Palestinians in Gaza: Besieged & Attacked w/ U.S. Weapons

Take Action to Protest Israel's Misuse of U.S. Weapons

On December 27, 2008, Israel launched a full-scale air and naval attack on the occupied Palestinian Gaza Strip. On January 3, 2009, Israel expanded its attacks on the Gaza Strip by launching a massive ground invasion.

Israel's three-week war on the occupied Gaza Strip exacted a terrible toll on the 1.5 million Palestinians living there, killing more than 1,300, injuring more than 5,000, destroying 4,000 buildings, and causing an estimated \$2 billion in damage to civilian infrastructure.

Israel's attacks come on top of a brutal siege of the Gaza Strip, which has created a humanitarian catastrophe of dire proportions for Gaza's 1.5 million Palestinian residents by restricting the provision of food, fuel, medicine, electricity, and other necessities of life.

Israel's war and siege on the Gaza Strip would not be possible without the weapons provided by the United States and its veto at the UN preventing the international community from holding Israel accountable for its human rights violations .

Here is a snapshot of the U.S. weapons Israel is using to kill and besiege Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip:

* Israel carried out its aerial bombardment of the Gaza Strip with U.S.-provided F16 fighter jets and Apache helicopter gunships. From 2001-2006, the United States provided Israel with more than **\$200 million in spare parts for its fighter jets** and more than **\$100 million in spare parts for its helicopter gunships**.

* In July 2008, the United States provided Israel with **186 million gallons of JP-8 aviation jet fuel** to fly its fleet of F16's and Apaches.

* Israel bombarded the Gaza Strip by sea with naval combat ships and on December 30, the Israeli navy intentionally rammed a boat in international waters which was carrying medical supplies to the Gaza Strip, nearly causing it to sink. The passengers of The Dignity included doctors and recent **Green Party Presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney**. In July 2008, the United States signed a contract to transfer **\$1.9 billion of naval combat ships**

Israel.

* Israeli aircraft and ships fired missiles and bombs provided by the United States. In October 2007, the United States signed a **\$1.3 billion contract with Raytheon to transfer to Israel thousands of TOW, Hellfire, and "bunker buster" missiles**. Israel also is dropped GBU-39 small diameter bombs on the Gaza Strip.

According to weapons experts, these bombs contain **uranium oxide** and have left behind radioactive contamination in places such as Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. In September 2008, **Boeing received a \$77 million contract to transfer 1,000 of these bombs** to Israel.

* Israel invaded the Gaza Strip by ground using tanks, armored personnel carriers, and other military vehicles with troops wearing night-vision goggles. Since 2001, the United States has given Israel more than **\$300 million in tank components and spare parts and various military vehicles, and nearly \$150 million in night-vision goggles and scopes**.



Israel is the largest recipient of U.S. military aid. In August 2007, the United States and Israel signed an agreement to increase arms transfers to Israel to **\$30 billion over the next decade**. President-Elect Obama already has pledged to implement this agreement without any conditions.

All U.S. aid programs, whether military or economic, have built-in mechanisms to prevent that aid from being used by countries to commit human rights abuses. According to U.S. law, countries that commit human rights abuses with U.S. aid are to be sanctioned and aid is to be cut off.

The **Arms Export Control Act** (P.L. 80-829) stipulates that countries purchasing or receiving U.S. weapons cannot use them

against civilians and must restrict their usage to "internal security" and "legitimate self-defense." Israel repeatedly uses U.S. weapons to commit human rights violations against civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Lebanon. Indeed, Israel could not maintain its illegal 41-year military occupation and siege of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip without these weapons.

According to the **Foreign Assistance Act** of 1961 (P.L. 87-195), "No assistance may be provided under this part [of the law] to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." As documented not only by Palestinian, Israeli, and international human rights groups, but by the U.S. government as well, Israel has an atrocious human rights record and therefore should be ineligible for any form of U.S. aid.

TAKE ACTION

* **Take to the streets and make your opposition public.** Hundreds of protests are scheduled to take place across the country. Find one near you or add details of your own protest.

* **Educate and organize people in your community.** Sign up to organize people in your community to oppose military aid to Israel and get an organizing packet.

* **Contact the White House, State Dept. and your Members of Congress.** Write a letter and set up a meeting with your Members of Congress to demand a lifting of the siege of Gaza, and investigation into Israel's misuse of U.S. weapons.

* **Get the message out to the media.** Download talking points and make your voice heard.

* **Step up the pressure on President Obama and the new Congress.** Sign our open letter and come to our Feb. 1-2 Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day.

* **Make a tax-deductible donation to us and give less of your tax dollars to Israel.**

FOR MORE DETAILS, VISIT:
<http://www.endtheoccupation.org>