

June 17, 2010

Dear Representative:

AJC urges you to join Representatives Ted Poe and Gary Peters on their bipartisan letter to President Obama reaffirming America's strategic alliance with Israel and supporting that nation's right to defend its citizens from Hamas attacks, including via a maritime blockade aimed at interrupting the resupply of missiles and other weapons. The letter further urges the Administration to "remain steadfast in the defense of Israel in the face of the international community's rush to unfairly judge and condemn Israel in international fora such as the United Nations Security Council" and to employ "U.S. influence and, if necessary, veto power to prevent any biased or one-sided resolutions from passing."

As the letter states with respect to the events of May 31, Israeli forces made every effort to avoid confrontation in preventing the protest flotilla from violating a valid maritime blockade and reaching the shore of Gaza, and resorted to force only when the lives of Israeli soldiers were placed in danger. Indeed, the confrontation occurred only aboard one of the flotilla's six ships, owned and operated by the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH)—a member of a group of Muslim charities, the Union of Good, which has been designated by the U.S. Treasury Department as a terrorist organization. Video coverage provides clear evidence that Israeli soldiers were brutally attacked as they boarded that ship and responded to a life-threatening situation.

Israel has announced its intention to carry out a thorough inquiry of the flotilla incident through a commission that, as the Administration has observed, meets the standard of a "prompt, impartial, credible, and transparent investigation." That commission must now be allowed to examine all the facts and reach its conclusions without pressure or prejudice. In the meantime, as the letter states, the U.S. should stand firm at the UN Security Council against biased or one-sided resolutions presented to that body, and "make every effort to thwart international condemnation and focus the international community on the crimes of the Iran-backed Hamas leadership against Israel and the Palestinian people."

For these reasons, AJC urges that you sign the letter circulated by Representatives Poe and Peters, and thereby join in their critically important affirmation of the U.S.-Israel relationship and of Israel's right to defend its citizens from assault.

Respectfully,



Jason F. Isaacson