

ACTION ALERT

Ask Senators to Co-sponsor Resolution 224 on Israeli-Palestinian Peace

June 12, 2006

BACKGROUND: A new resolution, S. Res. 224, introduced by Senators Feinstein, Lugar, Dodd, Hagel, Baucus, Byrd, Sununu, Voinovich and Whitehouse, reaffirms the Senate's dedication to a two-state solution with "the State of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security." The Senate Resolution renounces violence and terror, reaffirms an unwavering commitment to Israel's security, and calls on the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority to recognize Israel, renounce terrorism, and accept past agreements. It calls on both Israeli and Palestinian leaders to work for peace and to refrain from "any actions that would prejudice the outcome of final status negotiations."

Additionally, Senate Resolution 224 states that "American diplomatic presence on the ground is critical to bringing Israelis and Palestinians together;" thus, it urges the Administration "to pursue a robust diplomatic effort" and to make a two-state solution "a top priority." The Senate Resolution calls for President Bush to engage the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority in negotiations, as well as to appoint a Special Envoy for Middle East Peace. Also, Senate Resolution 224 welcomes the Arab League Peace Initiative and encourages Arab states in the region to become involved in this intensified diplomatic effort.

USCCB POSITION: Bishop Thomas Wenski, Chairman of the USCCB Committee on International Policy, sent a letter to the Senate (attached here), urging them to co-sponsor Senate Resolution 224. For many years the USCCB has worked with key national Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religious leaders to support robust U.S. leadership for peace in the region, and has spoken out on the human and moral dimensions of the continuing crisis in the Middle East. Peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors and the establishment of a viable Palestinian state living in peace alongside a secure Israel would contribute greatly to stability in the region. Ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be central to U.S. Policy.

ACTION REQUESTED: Ask your Senators to co-sponsor Senate Resolution 224. [Click here to find your Senator's Number](#) or call the Senate Information Line at 202-224-3121. Emphasize these points:

- Ask your Senators to co-sponsor Senate Resolution 224 (or thank them if they are already co-sponsors).
- Indicate your support for a two-state solution and a just and comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian peace.
- Urge the Senate to support continued and robust U.S. diplomatic efforts to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a top priority for U.S. policy.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Visit this website for recent USCCB and Church leaders' statements: <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/mideastind.htm#general>

Contact: Dr. Stephen M. Colecchi, Director, Office of International Justice and Peace, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 202-541-3196 or scolecchi@usccb.org.