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The White House
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Secretary of State:
Secretary Hillary Clinton
U.S. Department of State
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Washington, DC 20520

U.S. ambassador to the U.N.:
Ambassador Susan Rice
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New York, NY 10017



Take Action: Tell U.S. Not to Veto Palestine's Membership in UN Security Council

<http://endtheoccupation.org/article.php?id=3065>

by Josh Ruebner, National Advocacy Director, July 19, 2011

Last Friday an estimated 2,000 Palestinians and Israelis marched together through the streets of Jerusalem in support of Palestinian efforts to gain UN membership and additional statehood recognition when the UN meets this fall...

Who stands in their way? Our government does. The United States is trying furiously to restart the morally bankrupt "peace process," which perpetually fails because our government acts as "Israel's lawyer," in the words of former negotiator Aaron David Miller.

By dangling before Palestinians the prospect of renewed, biased, and interminable negotiations in exchange for dropping their UN membership bid, the United States is hoping to avert the embarrassment of vetoing Palestine's application in the Security Council and thereby once again exposing itself as the guarantor of Israeli military occupation and apartheid.

But, as Friday's demonstrators reminded us: "Only Free People Can Negotiate." And Palestinians are not free people while living under Israeli occupation, as second-class citizens of Israel, or as refugees whom Israel exiled from their homes....

Join the US Campaign and other prominent national organizations--including: the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, American Jews for a Just Peace, American Muslims for Palestine, CODEPINK--Women for Peace, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Friends of Sabeel--North America, Interfaith Peace-Builders, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD)--USA, Jewish Voice for Peace, and Peace Action--to urge the Obama Administration not to set a timetable on another's freedom by vetoing Palestine's UN membership application.

Dear Secretary of State Clinton and Ambassador Rice,

This month the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations is expected to submit an application for the State of Palestine to become a member of the United Nations. We, the undersigned individuals and organizations representing hundreds of thousands of supporters across the United States, call upon you not to veto this membership application in the Security Council.

In 1949, Senator John Sherman Cooper, the U.S. Representative to the United Nations General Assembly, promised that the United States had "no intention of preventing, by its vote, the admission to the United Nations of any applicant which received at least seven affirmative votes in the Security Council, which meant that the United States would not use its right of veto in the Security Council on any membership application."¹

However, the Obama Administration has made clear it intends to abandon this commitment when it comes to the State of Palestine. In remarks to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee on May 22, 2011, President Barack Obama stated that "No vote at the United Nations will ever create an independent Palestinian state." He equated Palestinian membership at the United Nations with "efforts to single Israel out at the United Nations...Israel's legitimacy is not a matter for debate." President Obama promised to "stand up against" this initiative, noting "That is my commitment; that is my pledge to all of you."²

For decades, Palestinians have been prevented from exercising their rights to freedom and self-determination on even a portion of their historic homeland due to Israel's historic and ongoing policies of ethnic cleansing, apartheid, military occupation, and colonization.

Palestinians are seeking membership in the United Nations as a way toward Palestinian freedom and self-determination and establishing a just and lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace that must include ending Israel's illegal military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip; equality for Palestinian citizens of Israel; and recognition and implementation of the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote in his Letter from Birmingham Jail: "For years now I have heard the word 'Wait!'...This 'Wait' has almost always meant 'Never.'" The worst stumbling block to freedom's advance, King argued, is the person who "believes he can set the timetable for another" person's freedom.³

Palestinians have waited more than 63 years for their human rights. We urge you--do not set a timetable for Palestinian freedom by vetoing Palestinian membership in the United Nations.

¹UN General Assembly Official Records, Ad Hoc Political Committee, Summary Records of Meetings 27 September – 7 December 1949, 26th meeting, 1 November 1949, UN Doc. A/AC.31/SR.26, para. 71.

²Remarks by the President at the AIPAC Policy Conference 2011, May 22, 2011.

³Letter from Birmingham Jail, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., April 16, 1963

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