



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4302

January 22, 2015

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write to you to express our deep concern regarding the Palestinian Authority's (PA) decision to join the International Criminal Court (ICC). On January 7, the State Department's spokeswoman remarked that Palestine "doesn't qualify to join the ICC." Unfortunately, the United Nations does not share the State Department's viewpoint. On January 6, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon announced that the Palestinians would become ICC members as of April 1, 2015. Regrettably, on January 16, 2015, the Prosecutor of the ICC opened a "preliminary examination of the situation in Palestine."

This development is deeply troubling. If the PA becomes a member of the ICC, it will undoubtedly attempt to exploit the organization for its own purposes and ultimately make the prospect of peace with Israel far more difficult to achieve. We believe the actions that the PA has taken require an immediate and forceful response from the United States that is commensurate with the gravity of its decision. We understand that the State Department is conducting a review of assistance to the PA in light of recent developments. The United States should not support direct economic assistance to the PA until it demonstrates a meaningful reversal of this destructive course and proves it can be a willing partner for peace.

The actions of the PA have greatly aggravated the already fragile political environment in the region. The United States must make it clear that the only path to a Palestinian state is through direct negotiations. The Palestinian Authority has already undertaken actions that will have long-term implications for our relationship with that entity. If it continues to move forward at the ICC, it will be risking irreparable harm to not only the prospects for peace, but the long-term viability of the PA itself.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter and we look forward to your response.

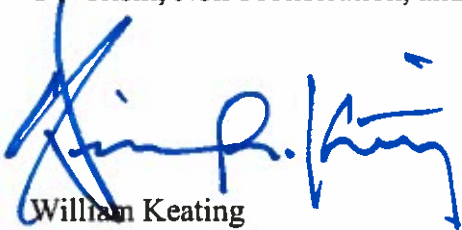
Sincerely,



Ted Poe
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Terrorism, Non-Proliferation, and Trade



Ed Royce
Chairman, House Committee on
Foreign Affairs



William Keating
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Terrorism, Non-Proliferation and Trade



Eliot Engel
Ranking Member, House Committee on
Foreign Affairs



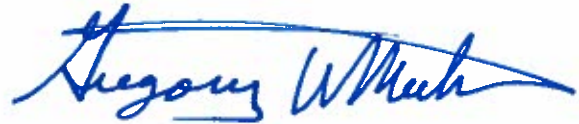
Matt Salmon
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Asia and the Pacific



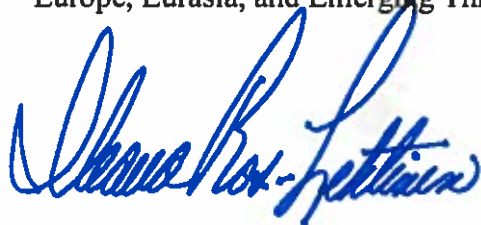
Brad Sherman
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Asia and the Pacific



Dana Rohrabacher
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats



Gregory Meeks
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Chairman, Subcommittee on the
Middle East and North Africa



Ted Deutch
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on the
Middle East and North Africa



Jeff Duncan
Chairman, Subcommittee on the
Western Hemisphere



Albio Sires
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on the
Western Hemisphere



Chris Smith
Chairman, Subcommittee on Africa,
Global Health, Global Human Rights,
and International Organizations