

***Excerpts from* APPEAL TO THE PRESIDENT TO MAKE  
ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE A PRIORITY OF U.S. POLICY**

**MR. PRESIDENT**, We are American Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religious leaders, including heads of more than twenty-five national organizations. We share a deep religious commitment to ending violence and achieving a negotiated peace between Israel and the Palestinian people and the other Arab states.

Hamas' victory in Palestinian elections and the incapacitating illness of Ariel Sharon create new challenges for peace-making efforts. While the world waits to see the form and policies of new Palestinian and Israeli governments we believe that your leadership, in coordination with the Quartet, is more essential than ever to prevent a new spiral of violence and to assure renewed progress toward peace.

We support your careful response to the Palestinian democratic election results, appreciating that Hamas' victory sends a clear message that Palestinians want a government committed to reform and responsible provision of services. We support your not acting precipitously to cut-off aid to the Palestinian people. We support your firm insistence that Hamas reject violence, recognize Israel and, consistent with documented views of Palestinian and Israeli majorities, join the international consensus for a two-state solution.

In pursuing this internationally supported vision of peace based on U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, we believe the immediate challenge is for the United States, in coordination with the Quartet, to get the Palestinian Authority and Israel to agree to a lasting ceasefire, and then to get both sides to take reciprocal steps as called for in the initial phase of the Road Map toward a negotiated two-state solution.

We know that our constituencies support continued and intensified U.S. diplomatic efforts to bring peace to the Holy Land. Let Palestinians and Israelis know that following the formation of their new governments, you and your Administration will work with determination and urgency to achieve peace.

**We urge your support for the following steps and pledge our support for your efforts.**

- \* **Press for an immediate, comprehensive and lasting ceasefire.**
- \* **Work to assure that the agreement on Gaza is fully implemented.**
- \* **Press both sides to implement their reciprocal road map obligations.**
- \* **Appoint an on-the-ground special envoy to manage and monitor negotiations.**

**Mr. President**, based on the deepest beliefs in our three Abrahamic religious traditions, we support your vision of peace - an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian state existing alongside the State of Israel, with peace and security for both peoples and a negotiated resolution of the status of Jerusalem. . . . We believe achieving Arab-Israeli-Palestinian peace is not only essential for Israelis and Palestinians, but also for reducing the threat of global terrorism, easing tensions among our religious communities worldwide, encouraging democracy in the region, and building world peace.

We pledge to work to together to build broad, public support, including bi-partisan Congressional support, for U.S. leadership for Israeli-Palestinian peace.

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## **National Interreligious Leadership Initiative For Peace in the Middle East**

### **Christian Leaders**

His Eminence, Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington  
His Eminence, William Cardinal Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore  
Most Rev. William Skylstad, President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
H.E., Archbishop Demetrios, Primate, Greek Orthodox Church in America  
H.E., Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Armenian Apostolic Church in America  
The Reverend Michael E. Livingston, President, National Council of Churches USA  
Bishop Mark Hanson, Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
The Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold, Presiding Bishop, Episcopal Church  
Bishop Ann B. Sherer, Representing the Council of Bishops, United Methodist Church  
Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Rev. John Thomas, General Minister and President, United Church of Christ  
Rev. Sharon Watkins, Gen'l Minister and Pres., Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ)  
Richard E. Stearns, President, World Vision  
Rev. Leighton Ford, President, Leighton Ford Ministries  
Richard J. Mouw, President, Fuller Theological Seminary  
Rev. John M. Buchanan, Editor and Publisher, Christian Century  
David Neff, Editor and Vice President, Christianity Today

### **Jewish Leaders**

Rabbi Harry K. Danziger, President, Central Conference of American Rabbis  
Rabbi Paul Menitoff, Executive Vice President Emeritus, CCAR  
Rabbi Brant Rosen, President, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association  
Rabbi Elliot Dorf, Rector, University of Judaism  
Rabbi David Saperstein, Director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism  
Rabbi Peter S. Knobel, Member of the Council, Parliament of World Religions  
Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson, Dean, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies  
Rabbi Amy Small, Past President, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association  
Rabbi David E. Stern, Temple Emanu-El, Dallas, Texas  
Rabbi Merle S. Singer, Rabbi Emeritus, Temple Beth El, Boca Raton, Florida  
Rabbi Alvin M. Sugarman, Vice President, A Different Future

### **Muslim Leaders**

Dr. Sayyid Muhammad Syeed, Secretary General, Islamic Society of North America  
Naeem Baig, General Secretary, Islamic Circle of North America  
Imam Warith Deen Mohammed, Leader, The Mosque Cares  
Imam Hassan Qazwini, Islamic Center of America  
Dawud Assad, Preident Emeritus, Council of Mosques, USA  
Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Director, American Sufi Muslim Association (ASMA)  
Iftekhhar A. Hai, Founding Director, United Muslims of America  
Nahid Angha, Ph.D., Co-Director, International Association of Sufism (IAS)  
Imam Yahya Hendi, Chaplain, Georgetown University

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