

RELEASE IN FULL

**Israeli-Palestinian negotiations must be grounded in international law
and human rights – define borders and address security issues first.**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For nearly two decades, there have been peace processes in the Middle East but no peace. In our recent visits to four countries across the region and the occupied Palestinian territory, we heard a consistent message: people want peace, but are skeptical about the process and have little faith in the international community to deliver.

There is now an opportunity to reassess the entire approach to the negotiations. The flawed U.S. effort to secure from Israel another partial freeze on settlement-building, in exchange for generous inducements, as a way of resuming direct talks between Israeli and Palestinian leaders has failed.

We now urge a renewed effort, firmly based on international law and respect for human rights, aimed at defining boundaries between Israel and a new Palestinian state and addressing security issues, without neglecting the other issues at the core of the conflict. Without such focus, we may see the possibility of a two-state solution slipping even further away.

Our primary purpose is to help bring peace and security to Israel and its neighbors.

We therefore call on governments and citizens around the world to insist that future negotiations are based on the following:

1. Universal human rights and respect for international humanitarian law must apply equally to all.
2. The occupation must end, and the aim of negotiations should be to define the boundaries of a future Palestinian state based on 1967 borders, including its capital in East Jerusalem. Such an accord could entail, if agreed, a one-to-one land swap to allow for minor adjustments. Initial negotiations should also aim at security arrangements in which both Israelis and Palestinians have confidence.
3. The remaining final status issues can be addressed more effectively once there is an agreement on borders and security.
4. Israeli settlements are illegal and all settlement activity must halt throughout the occupied Palestinian territory including in East Jerusalem.
5. Israel must lift its illegal and inhumane blockade of Gaza and stop the demolition and seizure of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.
6. Palestinian authorities in the West Bank and Gaza must end all human rights violations against political critics and rivals.
7. Israel's right to exist must not be denied. Incitement and calls for the destruction of