

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 236

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the leadership of the Palestinian people by Yasser Arafat is a hindrance to peace in the Middle East, and that such peace depends on institutions free from the taint of terrorism.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2003

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. DASCHLE) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the leadership of the Palestinian people by Yasser Arafat is a hindrance to peace in the Middle East, and that such peace depends on institutions free from the taint of terrorism.

Whereas unemployment among Palestinians has risen to 50 percent, and 59 percent of the Palestinian people live below the poverty line;

Whereas a June 2003 independent poll indicated that the Palestinian people do not see Yasser Arafat, the president of the Palestinian Authority, contributing to an end to their suffering;

Whereas the June 2003 poll found that 84 percent of Palestinians believe corruption exists in the institutions of

the Palestinian Authority, and $\frac{2}{3}$ of those who believe there is corruption also believe that corruption will increase or remain the same in the future;

Whereas Yasser Arafat has steadfastly blocked attempts at political, judicial, and economic reforms by using the Fatah Central Committee and the Palestinian Legislative Council to obstruct efforts to bring greater transparency and accountability to the Palestinian Authority;

Whereas the international community has lost confidence in the ability of the current Palestinian leadership to confront terrorism;

Whereas Palestinian Security Forces have refused to confront and dismantle Palestinian Islamic Jihad, whose express goal is the elimination of the State of Israel, and Hamas, both of which have been responsible for terrorist attacks that have killed over 800 Israelis in the last 3 years;

Whereas Abu Mazen, the first ever Palestinian Prime Minister, recently resigned because Yasser Arafat refused to turn over full control of the Palestinian Authority's 53,000-man security apparatus to the duly appointed government and continued to wield power over the General Intelligence Apparatus, the National Security Force, and the elite bodyguard unit known as Force 17;

Whereas the dismantling of terrorist organizations is a precondition to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East;

Whereas Yasser Arafat can no longer be trusted by the international community or the 3,500,000 Palestinian people living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to be an honest broker for peace; and

Whereas Yasser Arafat has presided over a period of decay in economic and security conditions affecting the Pales-

tinian people and has impeded any meaningful progress toward peace in the Middle East: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

2 (1) the leadership of the Palestinian people by

3 Yasser Arafat, who has condoned terror and refused

4 to dismantle terror organizations, is a hindrance to

5 efforts to reach a comprehensive peace in the Middle

6 East; and

7 (2) peace in the Middle East depends on the

8 construction of independent, transparent, and ac-

9 countable institutions that are free from the taint of

10 terrorism.

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