

April XX, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

As supporters of strong, constructive ties between the United States and Israel as well as the United States and the Palestinian people, we write to thank you for your administration's early efforts to restore and reaffirm longstanding, bipartisan U.S. policy in our relationship with both.

We welcome your commitment to reestablish the goal of a negotiated, two-state solution as a policy priority for the region and to advance security and prosperity for both Israelis and Palestinians in the immediate term. We also applaud your efforts to work toward repairing U.S. relations with the Palestinians and to restore vital economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, including \$75 million in Congressionally-appropriated bilateral aid for the West Bank and Gaza Strip and an initial \$150 million in funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), both of which were suspended by the previous administration, as well as \$15 million in emergency COVID-19 relief. We believe this aid is critical both to improving the lives of Palestinians and, as Israel's top security officials have often noted, to Israel's security interests.

We support your pledge to restore diplomatic relations with the Palestinians by reopening the U.S. consulate in East Jerusalem and working to reopen the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) mission in Washington, D.C. in a manner that is consistent with U.S. law. An independent U.S. mission to the Palestinians in Jerusalem, physically and institutionally separate from the U.S. Embassy to Israel, is essential to effectively conducting U.S.-Palestinian bilateral affairs, while demonstrating that the relationship is not ancillary to or in any way subsumed by the U.S. bilateral relationship with Israel. For decades prior to the previous administration's decision to shutter the consulate and absorb its functions into the U.S. Embassy to Israel, successive Democratic and Republican administrations alike relied on the consulate as a separate mission and key conduit for the Palestinian people. The impact of closing the consulate is not merely symbolic: As U.S. Foreign Service Officers in Jerusalem revealed following the consulate's closure, the move has also hampered their ability to engage credibly with the Palestinian Authority and to collect and relay on-the-ground information to State Department bureaus.

Similarly, the PLO mission in Washington long served as a critical point of contact between Palestinian and U.S. officials, providing a range of core diplomatic services for Palestinians in the United States. Established in 1994 after Israel and the PLO signed the Oslo Accords, the

mission helped facilitate the U.S. role as a mediator between the two parties and was an important component of the United States' commitment to advancing a two-state solution.

Reopening these diplomatic offices is a crucial step toward reversing the range of harmful actions by the previous administration that undermined the United States' capacity as an effective and impartial broker for peace and exacerbated distrust between Israelis and Palestinians. We are therefore encouraged by your administration's steps to identify and reverse U.S.-Middle East policy decisions of the last four years that eroded decades-long bipartisan precedent and prospects for a negotiated two-state peace.

We look forward to working closely with your administration in pursuing constructive U.S. policies that help bring about a better future for both Israelis and the Palestinians and a just and lasting peace in the region.

Sincerely,

JEWISHINSIDER