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*The Institute for Public
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largest Orthodox Jewish
umbrella organization
founded in 1898.*

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INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

February 16, 2007

To Members of the House of Representatives:

We write to you on behalf of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America – the nation's largest Orthodox Jewish umbrella organization – to express our support for the action led by Representatives Nita Lowey and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen to freeze the transfer of \$86 million in United States aid to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Especially after recent events, including the signing of the Mecca agreement, it is of great importance that Congress delays the transfer of these funds until a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of what American taxpayers will be supporting is understood.

The Mecca agreement signed last week by President Abbas and leaders of Hamas to form a unity PA government will not require Hamas to recognize Israel, abide by previously internationally recognized agreements regarding Israel or to renounce violence, all of which were conditions set by the Quartet before the PA could receive foreign aid. Only when the State Department obtains the necessary information from the PA that fully satisfies the concerns we share with you should any United States funds be released.

Where appropriate, we urge you to support the leadership of Representatives Lowey and Ros-Lehtinen on this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Mark Bane



Nathan J. Diament