**Ros-Lehtinen Urges Action to End Anti-Israel Agenda at the UN; Says Security Council Resolution 2334 Makes Peace Even More Remote**

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Office of Rep. Ros-Lehtinen

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U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R – FL), Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, made the following statement at a joint subcommittee hearing entitled, “Israel, the Palestinians, and the United Nations: Challenges for the New Administration.” Statement by Ros-Lehtinen (as prepared):

*“Two months ago, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2334 by a vote of 14-0, with the United States abstaining. It was a departure in policy by the Obama administration, and it was a move that was overwhelmingly opposed by many of us in Congress. Some argue, incorrectly, that Resolution 2334 has no real practical impact. But those who make this argument fail to see 2334 as part of a larger agenda – one piece of a larger plan by the Palestinians to undermine, isolate and delegitimize Israel.*

*The real practical impact of 2334 is that it leaves the possibility of peace even more remote. But that is by design: Abu Mazen and the current Palestinian Authority leadership have abandoned any pretense that they are interested in making peace with Israel. Instead, for years, they have been orchestrating a push at the United Nations to achieve unilateral statehood outside of direct negotiations with the Jewish State.*

*And last year, this push reached new height. UNESCO’s Executive Board and World Heritage Committee both passed similar resolutions rewriting history and distancing Jewish and Christian ties to Jerusalem. The Human Rights Council (UNHRC) approved a blacklist that can be used by those who support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement to further undermine Israel. And these efforts culminated with the passage of Resolution 2334.*

*After years of failed attempts at peace, and years of false moral equivalencies between Israel and the Palestinians, we have an opportunity to reassess our relationships and our objectives. The push at the UN by the Palestinians has created an atmosphere of complete mistrust for the Israelis – almost to the point of no return.*

*We now have an opportunity to grow and strengthen our alliance with Israel and show the world that we support our friends – we don’t leave them out to dry. At the same time, we cannot continue to pursue a failed policy with the Palestinian Authority. We must reconsider our current assistance programs for the PA and our relationship with Abu Mazen. It’s far past time that the United States hold Abu Mazen and the Palestinian Authority accountable for its actions at the UN, for its incitement to violence, and for its unwillingness to curb the violence and work with Israel to achieve a lasting peace. Continuing to provide assistance to the Palestinian Authority has proven that it does nothing to further the prospects for peace as long as Abu Mazen has no interest in working with the Israelis.*

*We must also take a long, hard look at what our role at the United Nations is. That is why I intend on reintroducing legislation that would address the need for reforms at the United Nations, because it is clear that engagement with the UN over these past few years has only served to legitimize its anti-Israel agenda. This is commonsense legislation that is intended on forcing some of the much needed reforms to get the UN and its specialized agencies back to doing what they were mandated to do.*

*I think many of us could agree that it makes sense to have a uniform definition of refugee, and that all refugees should be under the auspices of a single agency. We could all be in agreement that the body meant to promote and defend human rights worldwide should not be controlled by nations that have some of the worst human rights records. And it makes sense that the body tasked with ensuring the protection of cultural and historical heritage should not be used as a political tool to deny or erase the cultural and historical ties of a people to their homeland.*

*Too many continue to see the United Nations for what it is supposed to be – not for what it is – unwilling to come to the hard realization that we need to take a drastic new approach if we are to salvage its mission. It has become a politicized tool used more to block action or maintain the status quo. And it has become the place where the world’s dictators come together to demonize Israel, because it’s easy.*

*I have known Secretary General Gutteres for quite some time now, and I know he would agree that we can do better. I hope to work with him in the future as we tackle this difficult, but necessary task, and I hope that the Trump administration will work to bring reform to the UN so it can work as intended.”*