Palestinian Unity Government Statement

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom - U.S.

http://wilpfus.org/news/palestinian-unity-government-statement

We, the members of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, United States Section, welcome the formation of a Palestinian Unity Government, as announced on Monday, June 2, 2014. It has been a long time since all voices have been heard in that troubled land, and negotiations for peace have been undermined due to that fact. We are also pleased that the U.S. government has agreed to listen to all of the voices.

In the Palestinian elections held in 2006, the Palestinians overwhelmingly elected Hamas as their representative. However, both the U.S. and Israel chose to ignore the results of this exercise in democracy and instead to negotiate only with representatives of Fatah, the party that garnered fewer votes. This lack of inclusion has meant that many of the voices in Palestine were never heard, or never acknowledged. A consequence of this has been continued hostility and lack of peace.

Even Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu has noted that one must speak with one’s enemy in order to make peace. The U.S. has made a significant gesture toward achieving that discussion, and we applaud that move. We also urge the U.S. government to consider removing Hamas from its list of terrorist organizations, and thus to help remove the stigma from the group as well as to remove the obstacle to full negotiations which has often been voiced in the phrase, “We will not negotiate with terrorists.” When people believe that their voices are being heard, they do not feel the need to resort to the types of actions that others believe to be terror.

We sincerely hope that this is a real start down the road to a complete and lasting peace in the region.