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COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS

COMMITTEE ON
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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3904

September 7, 2006

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The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
US Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

I write to you with regard to the nomination of John Bolton to be US Representative to the United Nations. Today, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations was scheduled to have a vote on Mr. Bolton's nomination. The decision on whether to hold that vote is in the Chairman of the Committee's hands. Chairman Lugar decided to hold the vote over to a later date, and I support that decision.

It is no secret that I have serious questions about this Administration's policies in the Middle East. As we tackle enormous problems in the region, most notably with Iran and Iraq, I believe we need to be successful in forging alliances. A critical part of that work is accomplished by our Ambassador to the UN.

One of the key issues with many of our allies is the situation with Palestinians. I support the creation of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state living side-by-side in peace with its neighbor Israel. I believe progress on this front would be beneficial for the Palestinians, and further America's, and Israel's, security. The President, and you, frequently have spoken in favor of establishing a Palestinian state. On February 26, 2003, President Bush said "Success in Iraq could also begin a new stage for Middle Eastern peace, and set in motion progress towards a truly democratic state." On February 22, 2005, the President said "Israel must freeze settlement activity." And on April 14, 2004, the President wrote to then-Prime Minister Sharon, "The United States supports the establishment of a Palestinian state that is viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent, so that the Palestinian people can build their own future in accordance with the vision I set forth in June 2002 and with the path set forth in the roadmap."

Phase one of that Road Map states clearly that Israel will freeze all settlement activity. Yet, just this week, it is reported that 690 homes will be built in the West Bank settlements of Maale Adumim and Betar Illit. While the official US policy has been against settlement activity, no credible observer could think that the US could not do more to stop these new actions.


While I am a strong supporter of Israel, and believe her security is non-negotiable, we should have a more balanced approach – so that both sides can see that we are an honest broker for peace. I have been a long-time critic of the disparity between the rhetoric and the actions of the

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Administration on the subject of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. However, now I fear that even the rhetoric is going to stop. Is this expansion of settlement activity a signal that holding both sides to their commitments under the Road Map is no longer official US policy?

It is my hope that answers will be forthcoming about our policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and that the Committee can reconvene to debate Ambassador Bolton's confirmation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Chafee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and a distinct "Chafee" following.

Lincoln Chafee