

Letter to the Senate on Palestinian Aid in War Supplemental

~April 1, 2005~

The Honorable First LastName

United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator LastName,

Churches for Middle East Peace encourages you to support, without adding new conditions, the President's request for \$200 million in aid for the Palestinians in the '05 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.

Congressional support for the historic changes being taken by Prime Minister Sharon and Palestinian Authority President Abbas is crucial. As the President has said, the goal of two states living side by side in peace and security is within reach; we are at a moment of opportunity and we must seize it.

Churches for Middle East Peace supports transparency and accountability of aid provided to the Palestinians, and to any other group or country. But, progress toward peace has been undermined by the excessive conditions placed by the House Appropriations committee in its consideration of this aid, including the removal of the President's national security waiver. The President should have the flexibility to direct U.S. aid to the Palestinian Authority as he has before.

Expedited provision of U.S. aid will provide much needed evidence to the Palestinian people that working nonviolently within a political process can improve their lives and restore their hope for a viable state of Palestine. As well as institutional reform, the Palestinian people need the basic infrastructure development, home construction, agricultural and business development and job creation that will be funded by the '05 Emergency Supplemental.

We hope that you and the majority of the Senate will support the President's request and, in conference with the House, give back to the President the flexibility he needs to promote U.S. security interests in the region.

Sincerely,

Executive Committee of Churches for Middle East Peace

J. Daryl Byler, Chair

Stan DeBoe, OSST

Catherine Gordon

Jeanette Holt

Maureen Shea