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H. RES. 130

Expressing support for the appointment of former Senator George Mitchell as Special Envoy for Middle East Peace, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 4, 2009

Mr. DELAHUNT (for himself, Mr. FILNER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. CAPPs, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Ms. KILROY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, Mrs. HALVORSON, Mr. PERRIELLO, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. ISSA, Mr. OLVER, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. POLIS of Colorado, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. FORTENBERRY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the appointment of former Senator George Mitchell as Special Envoy for Middle East Peace, and for other purposes.

Whereas, on January 9, 2009, the House of Representatives passed, by an overwhelming margin, a resolution that reaffirmed `its strong support for United States Government efforts to promote a just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a serious and sustained peace process that leads to the creation of a viable and independent Palestinian state living in peace alongside a secure State of Israel.';

Whereas, on January 22, 2009, President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced the appointment of former Senator George Mitchell as the United States Government's Special Envoy for Middle East Peace;

Whereas President Obama, upon announcing Senator Mitchell's appointment, stated that `It will be the policy of my administration to actively and aggressively seek a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians, as well as Israel and its Arab neighbors' that ` . . . recognizes (Israel's) rightful place in the community of nations.';

Whereas President Obama, upon announcing this appointment, stated that Senator Mitchell ` . . . will be fully empowered at the negotiating table, and he will sustain our focus on the goal of peace.';

Whereas President Obama stated that he ` . . . was deeply concerned by the loss of Palestinian and Israeli life in recent days and by the substantial suffering and humanitarian needs in Gaza. Our hearts go out to Palestinian civilians who are in need of immediate food, clean water, and basic medical care, and who've faced suffocating poverty for far too long.';

Whereas Secretary of State Clinton stated that Special Envoy Mitchell `will lead our efforts to reinvigorate the process for achieving peace between Israel and its neighbors. He will help us to develop an integrated strategy that defends the security of Israel, works to bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that will result in two states, living side by side in peace and security, and to achieve further agreements to promote peace and security between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Senator Mitchell will also work to support the objectives that the President and I believe are critical and pressing in Gaza, to develop a program for humanitarian aid and eventual reconstruction, working with the Palestinian Authority and Israel on behalf of those objectives.';

Whereas Senator Mitchell stated, upon his appointment, that `peace and stability in the Middle East are in our national interest.';

Whereas Senator Mitchell also stated that `Conflicts are created, conducted and sustained by human beings; they can be ended by human beings' and that `This effort must be determined, persevering and patient. It must be backed up by political capital, economic resources, and focused attention at the highest levels of our government. And it must be firmly rooted in a shared vision of a peaceful future by the people who live in the region. At the direction of the President and the Secretary of State, and in pursuit of the President's policies, I pledge my full effort in the search for peace and stability in the Middle East.';

Whereas Senator Mitchell brings significant credibility to this effort as an experienced diplomat and negotiator, having been credited with brokering Northern Ireland's Good Friday peace accord that led to a resolution of the `Troubles' in Northern Ireland and the termination of an 800-year old sectarian and national conflict; and

Whereas Senator Mitchell possesses appropriate expertise on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, having authored a well-received report on the causes of the second intifada in April 2001: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives--

(1) congratulates Senator George Mitchell on his appointment as Special Envoy for Middle East Peace;

(2) commits to supporting President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and Special Envoy Mitchell in their vigorous pursuit of a diplomatic resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab conflicts based on the establishment of 2 states, the State of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, and with recognized borders;

(3) reaffirms that peace between Israel and the Palestinians and Israel and the Arab world are essential national security interests of the United States; and

(4) expresses its appreciation to those engaged in support of Middle East peacemaking and the recent cessation of hostilities in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, and calls on the international community to aggressively pursue efforts that facilitate a just and lasting resolution of these conflicts.

END