



July 20, 2020

The Honorable Jan Schakowksy  
2367 Rayburn House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ted Deutch  
2447 Rayburn House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David E. Price  
2108 Rayburn House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bradley S. Schneider  
1432 Longworth House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Schakowsky, Deutch, Price, and Schneider:

We write to express our appreciation for the important June 25, 2020 letter you authored to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Alternate Prime Minister and Defense Minister Benjamin Gantz, and Foreign Minister Gabriel Ashkenazai. We were heartened to see the signatures of 191 members of the House of Representatives on this letter raising their voices in disapproval of unilateral annexation of West Bank territory and warning about its potential dangers.

Along with our 300 colleagues at Commanders for Israel’s Security (CIS), all retired IDF generals as well as Mossad, Shin Bet, and Israel Police equivalents, we have been at the forefront of opposition to any unilateral annexation, large or small. We thus consider your important letter an expression of true friendship for Israel and concern for our country’s security and wellbeing.

Many of us were among the 25 former senior Israeli security officers who on August 27, 2019 wrote to members of the House of Representatives to express appreciation for the reiteration of support for a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as encapsulated in H. Res. 246. In that letter, we also stated that we looked forward to future “congressional initiatives that explicitly identify annexation as a threat to Israel’s security, and Jewish and democratic future.” We salute your leadership in doing just that.

We commend you on building such a broad coalition of Members of Congress to join you in signing this letter. We consider it a further manifestation of the broad-based support for the kind of Israel we have fought for on the battlefield and continue to strive for, one that is strong and safe, maintains a solid Jewish majority for generations to come, all while upholding the values of democracy and equality as enshrined in our Declaration of Independence.

As one, we are convinced that in any future negotiations Israel must insist on the annexation of certain settlement blocs and East Jerusalem Jewish neighborhoods within an agreed territorial swap. However, what is a just demand in negotiations is bound to prove counterproductive when done unilaterally. It is here that we find your principled stand most worthy of praise.

Unilateral annexation may trigger a chain of events beyond anyone’s control. It may undermine stability in the West Bank and Gaza, our peace treaties and security coordination with Egypt and Jordan, as well as any hope for an effective regional effort to check Iran’s meddling and ambitions. It will certainly

J I complicate further the road Israelis and Palestinians must travel to reach an eventual negotiated, two-state solution to our conflict.

In addition to warning about the dangers of unilateral annexation, we continue to affirm the importance of the robust security relationship between our countries. This is why we applauded the 2016 10-year Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Israel.

Indeed, the strategic bond between our countries has long been an important factor in our overall national security and in our ability to deter, and when needed, defeat, those in our region who wish to do us harm. Any perceived erosion, however misconstrued, in these relations and in the ironclad U.S. commitment to the durability of security assistance risks undermining our deterrence.

In your letter, you wrote, “longstanding, bipartisan U.S. foreign policy supports direct negotiations to achieve a viable two-state solution that addresses the aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians, and their desire for long-term security and a just, sustainable peace... Our fear is that unilateral actions, taken by either side, will push the parties further from negotiations and the possibility of a final, negotiated agreement.” We completely agree. While we do our utmost to pursue these objectives at home, we look forward to future bipartisan initiatives in support of Israel’s security, including sustained security assistance, the pursuit of a viable two-state solution, and opposition to any unilateral action, like unilateral annexation, that threatens to undermine it.

Thank you for devoting thought, time, and energy to an issue so close to our hearts and doing so at such a difficult time, when both our countries struggle with the devastating effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. This further accentuates your friendship and continued support of the shared values that underpin the U.S-Israel strategic alliance and Israel’s fundamental security needs.

Sincerely,

**Tamir Pardo**  
*Former Director of Mossad*

**Shabtai Shavit**  
*Former Director of Mossad*

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Danny Yatom**  
*Former Director of Mossad  
Former Commander, Central Command  
Former COS, NSC Adviser to PM Barak*

**Yaakov Peri**  
*Former Head of Shin Bet*

**Vice Admiral (Ret.) Ami Ayalon**  
*Former Head of Shin Bet  
Former Commander, Israel Navy*

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Matan Vilnai**  
*Former IDF Deputy Chief of Staff  
Former Commander of  
Southern Command  
Former Deputy Minister of Defense*

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Yair Golan**  
*Former IDF Deputy Chief of Staff  
Former Commander, Home Front Command  
Former Commander, Northern Command*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Dr. Ephraim Sneh**  
*Former Deputy Minister of Defense  
Former Head of IDF West Bank  
Civil Administration*



**Col. (Ret.) Dr. Shaul Arieli**

*Former Gaza Brigade Commander*

*Former Head of Peace Negotiations Administration for PMs Rabin, Peres, Barak*

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Shay Avital**

*Former Commander of the Special Operations Forces (Depth Corp)*

**Avner Azulay**

*Former Mossad Division Head*

**Vice Admiral (Ret.) David Ben Bashat**

*Former Commander of the Israeli Navy*

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Eyal Ben Reuven**

*Former Commander of the IDF Military Colleges*

*Deputy Commander of the IDF Northern Front*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Shlomo Brom**

*Former Director of IDF Strategic Planning Division*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Ehud (Udi) Dekel**

*Former Director of IDF Strategic Planning Division*

*Former Lead Peace Negotiator for PM Olmert*

**David Ebert Arbel**

*Former Mossad Division Head*

**Eran Etzion**

*Former Deputy National Security Adviser to PMs Sharon and Olmert*

**Rolly Gueron**

*Former Mossad Intelligence Division Head*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Shimon Hefetz**

*Former Military Secretary to Presidents Weizman, Katsav and Peres.*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Efraim Hiram**

*Former Commander of the IDF Galilee Division*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Giora Inbar**

*Former Commander of IDF Lebanon Liaison Division*

*Former IDF Commander of the Givati Brigade*

*Former IDF Commander of the Shaldag Special Forces*

**Brig. Ge. (Ret.) Ron Kitry**

*Former Senior Intelligence Officer*

*Former IDF Spokesperson*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Zeev Koren**

*Former Commander of IDF Manpower Directorate*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Ruth Malki Yaron**


*Former IDF Spokesperson*

**Ambassador Reuven Merhav**

*Former Mossad Division Head*

*Former Shin Bet Division Head*

*Former Director General MFA*



**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Amram Mitzna**

*Former IDF Commander of Central Command  
Former IDF Head of Planning Division*

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Avi Mizrahi**

*Former IDF Commander of Central Command  
Former IDF Commander of the Ground Forces*

**Ilan Mizrahi**

*Former Mossad Deputy Director  
Former Head of National Security Council to PM Olmert*

**Lt. Col. (Ret.) Orna Mizrahi**

*Former Deputy National Security Adviser to PM Netanyahu*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Israela Oron**

*Former Head of the IDF Women's Corps  
Former Deputy National Security Adviser to PMs Barak and Sharon*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Ilan Paz**

*Former Head of IDF West Bank Civil Administration*

**Arie Pellman**

*Former Deputy Head of Shin Bet*

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Amnon Reshef**

*Former Commanding General of the IDF Armor Corps*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Dov Sedaka**

*Former Head of IDF Gaza Civil Administration  
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**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Gadi Shamni**

*Former IDF Commander of Central Command  
Former Military Secretary to PM Sharon  
Former IDF Defense Attaché in the United States*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Iftach Spector**

*Former Commander of the IDF Tel Nof and Ramat David Airbases*

**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Baruch Spiegel**

*Dpt. IDF Coordinator of Government Activity in the Territories (COGAT)  
Former Commander of the IDF Golani Brigade*

**Vice Admiral (Ret.) Alex Tal**

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*Former Commander of the IDF Signal, Electronics and Computer Corps*