



December 17, 2009

To the IPF Community:

I greatly enjoyed the opportunity last Wednesday to meet so many of you who have built and supported Israel Policy Forum (IPF) over many years. I welcome the chance to meet more of you as we work towards our shared goals of supporting a comprehensive Middle East peace, including a two-state solution with a strong Israel and a viable Palestinian state.

As we all know, right now is a critical time for the efforts to make peace. George Mitchell has been charged with leading a sustained and committed U.S. effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. He and the President face tough challenges in meeting this goal. As always, any serious American efforts to make progress have and will continue to run up against serious resistance. It is therefore critical to bring our forces together in order to build and hold a consensus for a two-state solution *as a U.S. national security interest*.

Israel Policy Forum and Middle East Progress (MEP), a Center for American Progress (CAP) project, share this world view and our goals and measures of success are also the same. Uniting our efforts under the banner of Middle East Progress would leverage our ability to support U.S. policy, bring pragmatic voices into the debate and develop public support for sustained U.S. peacemaking efforts in the region.

Israel Policy Forum, under your collective leadership, has since 1993 been a powerful and consistent voice for a secure Israel and an independent Palestinian state, both states enjoying the same opportunities to flourish and prosper within the context of regional peace.

The Center for American Progress has in six short years staked a claim as the most influential progressive think tank in Washington. We have reached this position through a clear definition of our mission and a commitment to building an institution for the long term. We believe that the combination of the knowledge and experience of IPF and Middle East Progress will enable us to make an even more significant contribution by providing resources in support of President Obama's push for peace. We welcome the leadership of Peter Joseph, Larry Zicklin and the IPF team and advisers.

As you know, our goals will require broad-based support to succeed and, to that end, CAP has committed one third of the proposed new project budget. It is assumed that IPF will continue to fundraise at at least the level of its quarterly historical rate in support of

the combined efforts. These funds are critical to planning next steps together. We are currently moving ahead with a Middle East Progress 2010 program, which will include events, publications and communications, trips to the region, and outreach.

As we saw last week, there is no daylight between our views on the region or our shared belief that it is time to build a consensus in support of peace. We have every reason to believe that this will be a successful venture and are happy to welcome IPF supporters into the CAP family. I look forward to welcoming you all in Washington as we move this forward, and build on the joint base that we have created together.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rudy deLeon".

Rudy deLeon