

**National Interreligious Leadership Initiative  
for Peace in the Middle East  
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Website: [www.nili-mideastpeace.org](http://www.nili-mideastpeace.org)**

May 20, 2014

Secretary of State John Kerry  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary,

We write as Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders of the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East to affirm your commitment to continue providing determined U.S. leadership in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations for peace. Indeed, no past progress toward peace has occurred in this conflict without U.S. leadership, facilitation and resolute support.

President Obama's speech in Jerusalem and your sustained engagement once again raised the hopes of majorities of Israelis and Palestinians, and their supporters here, that the United States will succeed in helping Israel and the Palestinian Authority achieve a two-state peace agreement, before it is too late. A two-state agreement, in which both peoples will live in peace, security, and mutual recognition represents the only realistic resolution of the conflict. Over time, developments on the ground and failures of leadership are making that goal more difficult to achieve.

With reference to your briefing of religious leaders at Georgetown University on January 28, we are united in support of your commitment to achieve peace, drawing on benchmark principles and practical ideas from previous official and informal negotiations that offer possible compromises to resolve all issues in the conflict.

Mr. Secretary, we believe the time for Israeli-Palestinian peace is now, and that achieving peace needs your continued, determined engagement. We continue to be committed to mobilizing public support of our members in synagogues, churches and mosques across the country for your efforts, and we look forward to meeting with you at an appropriate time to discuss ways we can help.

Sincerely,

List of Endorsers follows.

**NILI Letter to Secretary of State Kerry**  
**May 20, 2014**  
**List of Endorsers**

**Christian Leaders:**

Bishop Richard E. Pates, Chairman, USCCB Committee on International Justice and Peace  
Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington  
Archbishop Vicken Aykasian, Director, Ecumenical Affairs, Armenian Orthodox Church in America  
Archimandrite Nathanael Symeonides, Ecumenical Affairs, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
Jim Winkler, President/General Secretary, National Council of Churches of Christ USA  
The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Bishop Warner H. Brown Jr., President, Council of Bishops, United Methodist Church  
Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop and Primate, Episcopal Church  
Reverend Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Reverend Geoffrey Black, General Minister & President, United Church of Christ  
Reverend Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister, President, Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ)  
Reverend Leighton Ford, President, Leighton Ford Ministries, Board Member, World Vision US  
David Neff, former Editorial Vice-President, Christianity Today  
John M. Buchanan, Editor and Publisher, Christian Century

**Jewish Leaders:**

Rabbi Rick Jacobs, President, Union of Reform Judaism  
Rabbi Rick Block, President, Central Conference of American Rabbis  
Rabbi David Saperstein, Director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism  
Rabbi Elliot Dorff, Ph.D. Rector and Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, American Jewish University  
Rabbi Burt Visotzky, Jewish Theological Seminary  
Rabbi Jason Klein, President, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association  
Rabbi Amy Small, Past President, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association  
Rabbi Peter Knobel, Past President, Central Conference of American Rabbis  
Rabbi Paul Menitoff, Executive Vice President Emeritus, Central Conference of American Rabbis  
Rabbi Alvin M. Sugarman, Rabbi Emeritus, The Temple, Atlanta Georgia

**Muslim Leaders:**

Imam Mohammed Magid, President, Islamic Society of North America  
Dr. Sayyid Muhammad Syeed, National Director, Islamic Society of North America  
Naeem Baig, Executive Director, Islamic Circle of North America  
Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Founder of the ASMA Society and Chairman of the Cordoba Initiative  
Dawud Assad, President Emeritus, Council of Mosques, USA  
Imam Yahya Hendi, Founder and President, Clergy Beyond Borders  
Eide Alawan, Interfaith Office for Outreach, Islamic Center of America  
Iftekhar A. Hai, Founding Director, United Muslims of America Interfaith Alliance

\*Organizations for Identification Only

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 20, 2014**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
Contact: Ron Young (425) 327-7545**

**Jewish, Christian and Muslim National Religious Leaders  
Urge Secretary of State Kerry to Continue  
To Provide Determined US Leadership for Peace**

**In a letter to Secretary of State Kerry, thirty-three religious leaders, including present and past heads of Jewish, Christian and Muslim national religious organizations agreed, “the time for Israeli-Palestinian peace is now, and that achieving peace needs your continued, determined engagement.”**

**The leaders believe, “a two-state agreement in which both peoples will live in peace, security, and mutual recognition represents the only realistic resolution of the conflict” and that “over time, developments on the ground and failures of leadership are making that goal more difficult to achieve.”**

**The leaders are united in support of Secretary Kerry’s “commitment to achieve peace, drawing on benchmark principles and practical ideas from previous official and informal negotiations that offer possible compromises to resolve all issues in the conflict.”**

**The leaders assured Secretary Kerry that “we continue to be committed to mobilizing public support of our members in synagogues, churches, and mosques across the country for your efforts,” and they requested a meeting at an appropriate time “to discuss ways we can help.”**