

Cosponsor the Partnership Fund for Peace Act

Widespread mistrust prevents Israelis and Palestinians from reaching a peace deal. Young people especially have lost hope. Though thousands of Israelis and Palestinians on the ground work together daily to bridge this “trust” gap by building cooperation among each other, they must scale up for change to be lasting. JCPA believes that with proper investment, a peaceful, two-state solution is truly possible; however, peace will not be established until there is a unified effort to change both the economic conditions in the region and communities’ attitudes toward one another.

The Partnership Fund for Peace would help accomplish this grassroots peace-building and create an environment in which diplomats can eventually achieve peace in the Middle East. The Fund would promote and support contact, cooperation, dialogue, shared community building, peaceful coexistence, joint economic development, and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. In addition, it would provide an expert presence on the ground that would take a strategic long-term approach to grassroots peace-building and leverage international donor support.

- **Cosponsor and support the bipartisan Partnership Fund for Peace Act (S. 1727/H.R. 3104), which would help preserve a two-state future by creating grassroots, people-to-people partnerships and joint opportunities for economic development among Israelis, Palestinians, and their American counterparts.** This legislation—supported by JCPA, The Jewish Federations of North America, Israel Action Network, AIPAC, J Street, AJC, Americans for Peace Now, Anti-Defamation League, Churches for Middle East Peace, the Alliance for Peacebuilding, and the Alliance for Middle East Peace—would establish a fund to allocate up to \$50 million a year to facilitate and finance joint ventures and people-to-people exchanges in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.
- **There is historical precedent for the creation of such a fund.** Following the Anglo-Irish agreement in 1986, the international community, led by the U.S. and the Commonwealth, came together to form the International Fund for Ireland, a multilateral fund that focused on building capacity, shared spaces, and reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants. Between 1986 and 2010, the fund distributed over a billion dollars, which helped effectively reduce conflict and contribute to economic stability.
- **This bill is a necessary step to support shared society programs, which is critical to mitigating and ultimately resolving this conflict.** Like the International Fund for Ireland, the proposed fund would provide a stable source of funding at appropriate levels to support on-the-ground programs that promote cross-border and sectarian reconciliation and build a constituency that will reinforce an ultimate peace agreement.

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