

House of Representatives Votes to Condemn the United Nations

With the support of a large number of Democrats, House Republicans voted unanimously Thursday night to rebuke the United Nations for passing a resolution that condemns Israel for its West Bank settlement construction.

The final vote was 342-80, providing a stinging bipartisan slap in the face to President Barack Obama and his foreign policy. It also signals what is sure to be a bitter relationship throughout the incoming administration of President-elect Donald Trump.

Prior to the vote, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) took the extraordinary step of coming down to the well to speak about U.N. Security Council Resolution 2334, as well as the measure the House was about to vote upon. In that speech, he said:

My colleagues, I'd like to read you a quote:

"Peace is hard work. Peace will not come through statements and resolutions at the United Nations—if it were that easy, it would have been accomplished by now. Ultimately, it is the Israelis and the Palestinians who must live side by side."

That was President Obama in 2011—and he was right.

I am still stunned by what happened last month. This government—our government—abandoned our ally Israel when she needed us the most.

And do not be fooled. This U.N. Security Council resolution was not about settlements, and it certainly was not about peace. It was about one thing and one thing only: Israel's

right to exist as a Jewish democratic state.

These types of one-sided efforts are designed to isolate and delegitimize Israel. They don't advance peace. They make it more elusive.

The cornerstone of our special relationship with Israel has always been right here in Congress. This institution—the heart of our democracy—has stood by the Jewish state through thick and thin.

We were there for her when rockets rained down on Tel Aviv. We were there for her by passing historic legislation to combat the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement. And we've been there for her by ensuring Israel has the tools to defend herself against those who seek her destruction.

And in every one of those instances, Republicans and Democrats have worked together to get these things done. That's because our historic alliance with Israel transcends party labels and partisan bickering. We see that bipartisanship right here on the House floor today in condemning this anti-Israel resolution.

I want to thank Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, and all of our members on both sides of the aisle who spoke out on this issue and helped assemble this legislation. It sends a powerful message, and it turns a page.

It's time to repair the damage done by this misguided hit job at the U.N. It's time to rebuild our partnership with Israel and reaffirm our commitment to her security. And it's time to show all of our allies that, regardless of the shameful events of last month, the United States remains a force for good.

I ask the whole House to support this resolution on behalf of the American people. Thank you.

The largely symbolic measure is now headed to the Senate, which is almost certain to overwhelmingly approve it. {eo}