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Rt Hon. David Miliband MP  
Secretary of State  
Foreign & Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London  
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9 August 2007

Dear Foreign Secretary,

I am writing to you as Chair of the UN Association of the UK (UNA-UK) to offer our strong support for the efforts which are now getting underway to revive a comprehensive Middle East peace process. For far too long now the region has suffered from the lack of any serious international attempt to address the core problems of the conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbours; and last summer, in Lebanon and Gaza, we saw the consequences of that neglect. It is encouraging, therefore, that the government is giving a high priority to the new initiatives under discussion.

UNA-UK shares the government's vision of a comprehensive settlement based on UN Security Council resolutions 242, 338 and 1397 and entailing the creation of a viable Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel, both secure and respected within recognised borders. We also agree with the importance of building upon former Crown Prince Abdullah's initiative, adopted by the Arab League on 28 March 2002, which offers full normalisation of relations between the Arab states and Israel, in the context of a final settlement.

While interim measures, such as those foreseen in the Quartet's Road Map, and steps to strengthen the institutions of the Palestinian Authority are valuable, we very much hope that the government will press for any renewed process to deal also, from the outset, with what are called the final status issues: the boundaries of a viable Palestinian state, illegal settlements, Jerusalem and refugees. Without the inclusion of these final status issues, we fear that that process will lack credibility and will risk going the way of so many previous attempts at partial solutions.

We hope too that the government will press for a fully inclusive process, open to all on the Palestinian side who are willing to work in the context of a two-state solution and to abstain from violence. It is surely desirable to keep lines of communication open to Hamas and to avoid any steps which are likely to consolidate the current division between Gaza and the West Bank.

We believe that the European Union's role in the peace process has hitherto been understated and undervalued. We hope that the government will work within the European Union to transform that situation and to ensure pro-active EU input to the work of the Quartet and the very closest cooperation, in particular with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It is important that any resumed peace effort does not fall victim to the impending US electoral campaign and remains as high a priority to the incoming administration as it is now, belatedly, to the outgoing one.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick  
Chair, UNA-UK