

## **To Promote Middle East Peace and Security, Democrats in Congress Must Reject Illegal Israeli-Trump Annexation of Palestinian Lands**

Yesterday, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo issued official U.S. “country of origin” labeling guidelines that grant legitimacy to Israel’s illegal settlements by requiring all products produced in Area “C” of the occupied West Bank to be marked as “Product of Israel” or “Made in Israel” when exported to the United States.

Secretary Pompeo is once again flagrantly advancing the Israeli government’s effort to unlawfully annex Palestinian lands. This act effectively erases the longstanding bipartisan U.S. policy differentiating between Israel and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, territory occupied by Israel in 1967.

This official State Department action means that the U.S. has provided tacit recognition of de facto Israeli annexation of occupied Palestinian lands in violation of international law. This further entrenches an undemocratic system in which Israel would permanently rule over a Palestinian people who are denied basic civil rights and human rights.

Secretary Pompeo claims his actions are consistent with a “reality-based foreign policy approach.” This right-wing “reality” is nothing more than overt Trump administration support for Israel to maintain an unjust political system that denies Palestinians the right to self-determination and an independent Palestinian state.

The Trump administration has acted with complete disregard for international law and decades of bipartisan U.S. foreign policy consensus to aggressively support and legitimize permanent occupation and a de facto system of apartheid. I reject Israeli annexation and will work to ensure the U.S. does not support, defend, or legitimize any plan to illegally annex occupied Palestinian lands. This is exactly why I introduced H.R. 8050, *The Israeli Annexation Non-Recognition Act*, in August.

I urge Democrats in Congress to support efforts to promote peace, justice, and equality by prohibiting the U.S. from formally recognizing, legitimizing, or providing U.S. taxpayer assistance to any area of the occupied West Bank annexed by the Government of Israel in violation of international law.

I also strongly urge President-elect Biden to implement rights-respecting policies grounded in U.S. obligations under international law, including United Nations Security Council resolutions, specifically Resolution 2334.

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