

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 29, 2008

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary of State  
Department of State  
2201 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

We write respectfully to urge you to state without delay that the U.S. will not participate in the Durban II Anti-Racism Conference (Durban II).

As you know, Durban II is the follow-up and implementation arm of the UN World Conference on Racism held in Durban, South Africa in 2001. The U.S. walked out of this Conference after the anti-semitism and anti-Israel activities reached such an intolerable level that it was beyond repair. One of the central outcomes of this so-called Conference on Racism was to suggest that Palestinians are victims of Israeli racism, thereby diminishing seriously the prospects of a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

As you know, the planning for Durban II is well underway. Already the activities of the Preparatory Committee for the conference, which began meeting this past summer, have clearly demonstrated that the follow-up conference is doomed to be yet another travesty focused on demonizing Israel. The Executive Committee of the Preparatory Committee for Durban II is chaired by Libya, and one of its Vice-Chairman is Iran, despite the fact that this country's leader has called for the destruction of Israel and been a leader on one of the most despicable forms of racism – Holocaust denial. Importantly, the UN Human Rights Council, to which the U.S. has refused to seek membership, serves as the planning authority for the conference.

Much like the UN Human Rights Council, the Durban Conference is yet another example of a seemingly noble UN agenda item being hijacked by member states to spew anti-Semitism. For this reason we strongly supported the decision of the Administration to direct Ambassador Mark Wallace to vote against the UN 2008-09 budget due to its inclusion of funding for the Durban II Conference. We believe that the U.S. should take the logical next step from its vote in the General Assembly by issuing a policy statement that it will not participate in the Durban II Conference. Such an action will be critical for

exposing the Conference for what it is – a platform for anti-Semitism, the demonization of Israel, and the promotion of anti-democratic values under the guise of "human rights."

On January 23<sup>rd</sup> the Government of Canada took the courageous step of making an official announcement that it will not participate in the Durban II Conference. We believe that it is critical for the U.S. to assert its moral leadership by joining its ally in making a similar announcement. We respectfully urge that this announcement be made as soon as possible to capitalize on the momentum that has been generated by the statement of the Canadians and your principled action to date in the UN General Assembly.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our request and we look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Sincerely,

Norm Coleman

Paul Patton

Jim Delfino

Paul Brown

Sammy Claiborne

Jackie Byrd

Chaz Sumner

John Conner

Thad Cochran

Robert W. Wicker

Jeff Sessions

John Thune

Greg E. Craig

Michael B. Enzi

Pat Bond

Kay Bailey Hutchison

Jim Bunning

John

John Banas

Elizabeth Dole

Tom Kuy

George V. Voinovich

Orvin Hatch

Bill Martinez

John Ensign

Wayne Allard

Jon Lick