

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 3, 2009

The Honorable Howard Berman
Chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Berman,

As Members of Congress we are deeply concerned about any violation of human rights and international law wherever and whenever it may occur and we believe it is essential that such violations be identified and investigated.

We are aware that the U.N. General Assembly is soon to act on a resolution relating to the findings of the Goldstone Report and we have profound reservations about the one-sidedness of the resolution that was passed by the U.N. Human Rights Council and its exclusive focus on the actions of Israel and corresponding neglect of actions by Hamas or other parties. As such, we believe it is thoroughly appropriate for the U.S. Congress to insist on a balanced U.N. resolution and investigation that holds all parties accountable. We also believe it is perfectly legitimate for the U.S. Administration to insist on such balance in any resolutions from the U.N. and, if necessary, to veto further action on resolutions that fail to meet this standard.

Having established that, however, we must also convey our deep reservations regarding H.Res.867, a resolution that harshly and in several parts inaccurately criticizes the Goldstone Report. Few jurists in the world today have a record as impressive as Justice Goldstone, who has led human rights investigations in South Africa, Rwanda, the former

Yugoslavia and Kosovo, and served as a member of the International Panel of the Commission of Enquiry into the activities of Nazism in Argentina. Given the seriousness of this matter, we believe it essential that Congress conduct a proper hearing and invite Justice Richard Goldstone to testify. Justice Goldstone has published a detailed reply to H.Res. 867 pointing out specific factual inaccuracies, misrepresentations and items taken out of context. We believe that to act on H. Res. 867 or any other resolution regarding his report without hearing from Justice Goldstone directly is premature and unwise.

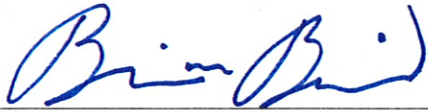
Further, we have serious concerns that H.Res. 867's language insisting that the U.S. "oppose unequivocally any endorsement or further consideration in multilateral fora.", is excessively broad and inconsistent with our national commitment to human rights and the rule of law. If violations of human rights or international law have occurred, the United States should not stand in the way of their investigation but instead should insist that any investigation should be fair, fact based, and apply with equal rigor and justice to any and all parties.

Therefore, we respectfully request that H.Res. 867 not be brought to the floor as it is currently written. Instead, we encourage a resolution that focuses on the imperative of a fair and objective process within the U.N.; that does call on the U.S. administration to oppose any resolution that does not meet such standards; that looks at possible violations by any and all sides to the conflict; that urges, as recommended by the Goldstone report, internal investigations by the respective governments or groups; and that invites Justice Goldstone to present his findings and discuss his recommendations before a hearing of the Congress.

We have attached with this letter a copy of Justice Goldstone's response to H.Res. 867 as well as a letter from Israeli human rights NGOs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



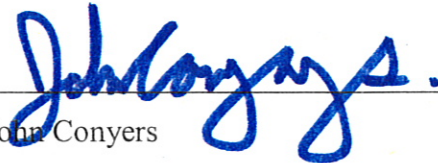
Brian Baird
Member of Congress



Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



Lois Capps
Member of Congress



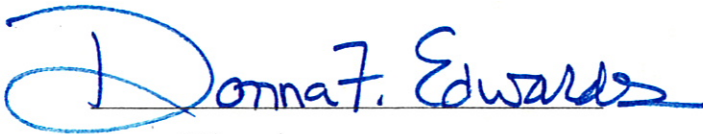
John Conyers
Member of Congress



David Price
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



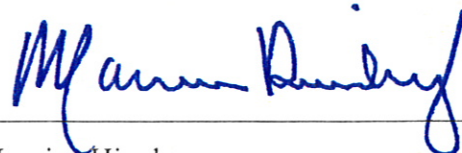
Donna Edwards
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Bob Filner



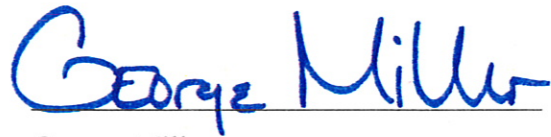
Maurice Hinchey

Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

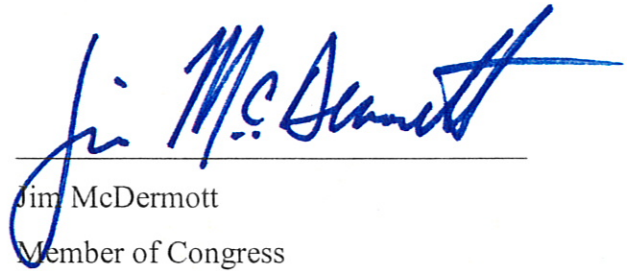
Member of Congress



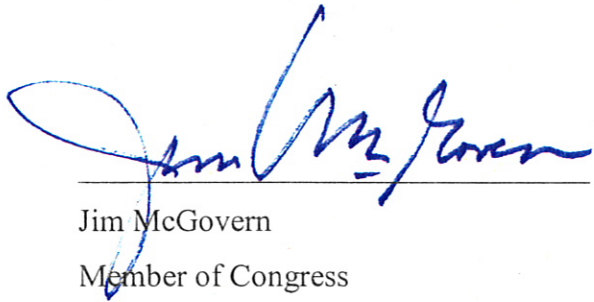
George Miller
Member of Congress



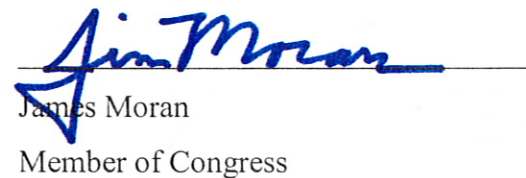
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



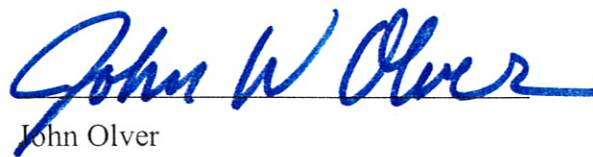
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



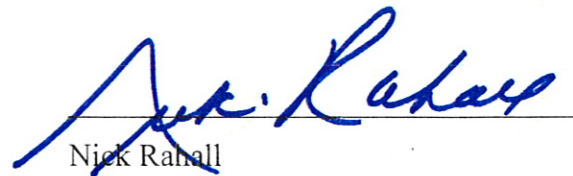
Jim McGovern
Member of Congress



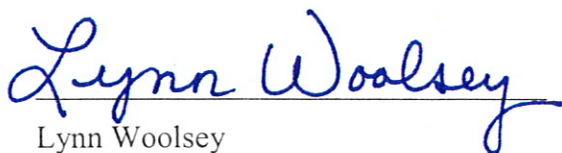
James Moran
Member of Congress



John Olver
Member of Congress



Nick Rahall
Member of Congress



Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress



David Wu
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Lloyd Doggett

Lloyd Doggett

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