



The Middle East Partnership for Peace Act

The Challenge:

The power of both people-to-people programs and economic development as conflict resolution tools is clear: less fear, hatred and violence, increased economic growth, and greater understanding of the other, as well as the stake each party has in a shared future. The U.S.'s support of these priorities, via the International Fund for Ireland and USAID's Conflict Management and Mitigation programs have helped to build stronger societies in spaces that have been ravaged by war and internal strife in conflict zones.

Despite wide awareness of the efficacy of such tools, they have too rarely been harnessed at a significant scale in the Israeli-Palestinian context. We *know* that they can change lives, but we have never funded them at scale where they can transform entire communities. We can see the consequences all around us. Support for a two-state solution has dropped significantly, while support for violence or zero-sum agendas denying the legitimacy of the other have increased. Polling consistently demonstrates that both trends are most pronounced among Israelis and Palestinians under the age of 30, the cohort least likely to have had any meaningful engagement with the other.

A bold new effort is needed as part of a systemic approach to dealing with the mistrust and fear that lays at the center of this fast-developing crisis. ***The bipartisan and bicameral Middle East Partnership for Peace Act aims not just to grow economic development but to also tackle the incitement and dehumanization that have plagued both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.***

The Middle East Partnership for Peace Act

Inspired by the success of the International Fund for Ireland, and the result of a decade of ALLMEP advocacy, **the widely supported Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA)** will leverage and increase public and private contributions worldwide, funding joint economic development and civil society projects that promote coexistence and a broad support for peace, improving both social and economic conditions on the ground. MEPPA represents an updated version of the Partnership Fund for Peace Act, which was introduced by Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-NY), Representative Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), Chairman Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Senator Chris Coons (D-DE), Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO).

The legislation works toward promoting contact, cooperation, dialogue, shared community building, peaceful coexistence, joint economic development and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. Specifically, the legislation calls for:

- The establishment of a **People-to-People Partnership for Peace Fund** to provide funding for projects that support peaceful co-existence between Israelis and Palestinians;
 - Under the Administrator of USAID, the new program will have the ability to leverage US dollars by donating and accepting funding from international actors;
 - The fund prioritizes cross border, as well as shared society, programming;
 - The fund establishes a **13-member advisory board**, composed of US citizens with technical and regional experience, as well as two additional board seats for international actors;
- The establishment of a new **Joint Investment for Peace (JIP)** Initiative to provide investments to small/medium-sized Palestinian owned enterprises;
 - Housed with the US International Development Finance Corporation (IDFC), the new Initiative will prioritize projects that increase economic cooperation between Israelis, Palestinians, and the United States;
- USAID and the IDFC to coordinate and share information in advance of providing resources in order to ensure both agencies are fulfilling the policy goals described in MEPPA;
- **A five-year authorization of \$50 million to the new PFP and Initiative for a grand total of \$250 million. The dollar amount is divided between the two entities as follows:**
 - Year 1: 30M to P2P and \$20M to JIP
 - Year 2: \$25M/\$25M
 - Year 3: and 4: \$20M/\$30M
 - Year 5: \$15M/\$35M
- Requiring all expenditures from the Fund **follow mission directives** applicable to the West Bank/Gaza that have been issued by USAID and specifically prohibits any assistance from the Fund to be provided to national governments, any individual/group involved/advocating for terror activity and to Hamas, the PA or the PLO.

Organizational Endorsements

