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PENCE SAYS U.S. MUST STAND WITH ISRAEL

Washington, May 8, 2003 - Washington, D.C.- U.S. Congressman Mike Pence today made the following speech from the House floor on the Administration's road map in the Middle East:

"Mr. Speaker, America stands with Israel.

"This weekend as the Secretary of State begins a key phase of negotiations in the road map for peace I am confident he will remember this core value of the American people.

"America is not a neutral party in the negotiations in the Middle East. We are not nor do we aspire to be an honest broker.

"America stands with Israel.

"In this vain, yesterday on the International Relations Committee we adopted the Lantos amendment to the State Department Authorization bill, demanding [the first approach be Palestinians' concessions.]

"The Palestinian authority must first recognize Israel's right to exist, hunt down terrorists and dismantle terrorist infrastructure before Israel can be expected to make any concessions on the path of peace.

"I pray for the peace of Jerusalem and I pray that Prime Minister Abbas and his cabinet will defeat the terrorists within their midst and choose life for their people and that war torn region."

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