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From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
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To: H
Subject: FW: The Revolution's Missing Peace (President Gul's Op-Ed in NYT)

You probably saw, but worth reading.

By ABDULLAH GUL

THE wave of uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa is of historic significance equal to that of the revolutions of 1848 and 1989 in Europe. The peoples of the region, without exception, revolted not only in the name of universal values but also to regain their long-suppressed national pride and dignity. But whether these uprisings lead to democracy and peace or to tyranny and conflict will depend on forging a lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement and a broader Israeli-Arab peace.

The plight of the Palestinians has been a root cause of unrest and conflict in the region and is being used as a pretext for extremism in other corners of the world. Israel, more than any other country, will need to adapt to the new political climate in the region. But it need not fear; the emergence of a democratic neighborhood around Israel is the ultimate assurance of the country's security.

In these times of turmoil, two forces will shape the future: the people's yearning for democracy and the region's changing demographics. Sooner or later, the Middle East will become democratic, and by definition a democratic government should reflect the true wishes of its people. Such a government cannot afford to pursue foreign policies that are perceived as unjust, undignified and humiliating by the public. For years, most governments in the region did not consider the wishes of their people when conducting foreign policy. History has repeatedly shown that a true, fair and lasting peace can only be made between peoples, not ruling elites.

I call upon the leaders of Israel to approach the peace process with a strategic mindset, rather than resorting to short-sighted tactical maneuvers. This will require seriously considering the Arab League's 2002 peace initiative, which proposed a return to Israel's pre-1967 borders and fully normalized diplomatic relations with Arab states.

Sticking to the unsustainable status quo will only place Israel in greater danger. History has taught us that demographics is the most decisive factor in determining the fate of nations. In the coming 50 years, Arabs will constitute the overwhelming majority of people between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. The new generation of Arabs is much more conscious of democracy, freedom and national dignity.

In such a context, Israel cannot afford to be perceived as an apartheid island surrounded by an Arab sea of anger and hostility. Many Israeli leaders are aware of this challenge and therefore believe that creating an independent Palestinian state is imperative. A dignified and viable Palestine, living side by side with Israel, will not diminish the security of Israel, but fortify it.

Turkey thinks strategically about the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, not only because it knows that a peaceful Middle East would be to its benefit, but also because it believes that Israeli-Palestinian peace would benefit the rest of the world.

We are therefore ready to use our full capacity to facilitate constructive negotiations. Turkey's track record in the years before Israel's Gaza operation in December 2008 bears testimony to our dedication to achieving

peace. Turkey is ready to play the role it played in the past, once Israel is ready to pursue peace with its neighbors.

Moreover, it is my firm conviction that the United States has a long-overdue responsibility to side with international law and fairness when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The international community wants the United States to act as an impartial and effective mediator between Israel and the Palestinians, just as it did a decade ago. Securing a lasting peace in the Middle East is the greatest favor Washington can do for Israel.

It will be almost impossible for Israel to deal with the emerging democratic and demographic currents in the absence of a peace agreement with the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab world. Turkey, conscious of its own responsibility, stands ready to help.

Abdullah Gul is the president of Turkey.

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