

**(WASHINGTON)**--- Congressman Allen West (FL-22) released this statement today after Israeli Ambassador to the United States Michael Oren spoke to the Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce during it's Washington Fly-In:

"Today I had the tremendous honor to speak with Ambassador Oren at the Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce Fly-In concerning the challenges that both Israel and the United States face in the Middle East. Not only do the Ambassador and I share a deep commitment to Israel, but we both come from families dedicated to military service – both of our fathers served in World War II, and both Ambassador Oren and I are former paratroopers. I asked Ambassador Oren today to let the Israeli people know I remain committed to the peace and security of the State of Israel – the United States' greatest ally in the Middle East.

Yesterday's vote by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to grant full membership to the Palestinian Authority displays a total disregard for the peace process which Israel has been firmly committed to. I strongly urge President Barack Obama to comply with long-standing American law that prohibits any American taxpayer dollars from going to any United Nations agency if the Palestinian Authority is granted membership. Anything less than a full withholding of all funds to UNESCO by the Obama Administration is simply unacceptable."

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