

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 16, 2010

The Honorable Susan E. Rice
U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations
United States Mission to the United Nations
799 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ambassador Rice,

We write to express our dismay regarding the United Nations decision on November 23, 2010 to hold the Durban III World Conference Against Racism in New York City on September 21, 2011, just days after the tenth anniversary of the September 11th attacks.

We appreciate the United States' strong statement opposing the resolution on Durban III. However, we urge you to again refrain from participating in the conference as long as it undermines the very goal of fighting discrimination with a demonstration of anti-Semitism. We applaud the Canadian government's decision to boycott the event. We believe that the United States ought to demonstrate leadership on these issues by removing itself from association with Durban III and encouraging other nations to do the same.

Unfortunately last year the 2009 U.N. Durban Review Conference Against Racism (Durban II) proved to be a repeat of the 2001 controversial summit as extreme anti-Semitic voices took over Durban II, and the United States and our allies were forced to pull out. The United States had likewise withdrawn from participating in Durban I primarily because the conference was viewed as disproportionately focused on Israel and the United States. We are very concerned that Durban III will follow in the pattern of the two preceding conferences by serving once again as a forum for anti-Semitic and anti-American demonstrations, which would again taint this opportunity to combat the abhorrent practices of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related forms of intolerance.

It is important that the United States send a strong signal that another anti-Semitic and anti-American Durban Conference particularly held so close to the tenth anniversary and location of the worst terrorist attack in American history is unacceptable. We can send this signal by making clear now that the United States will not participate in this gathering. Of course, we would welcome the United States' eventual return to the conference if it were to become a legitimate forum for combating discrimination - but that is a development that seems highly improbable to us.

We respectfully ask that you keep us abreast of any developments and offer our assistance in efforts to combat racism and anti-Semitism.

Sincerely,





Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand



Senator James E. Risch


Senator Johnny Isakson

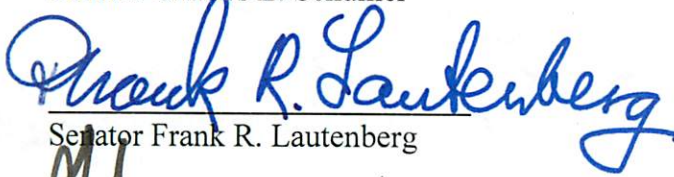

Senator Robert Menendez


Senator Benjamin L. Cardin

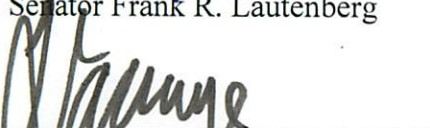

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Senator Charles E. Schumer


Senator Bill Nelson


Senator Frank R. Lautenberg



Senator Roger Wicker


Senator Dan Claitor

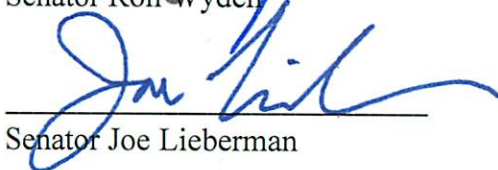

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