

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2956

To support the work of the United States Security Coordinator to Israel and the Palestinian Authority in furthering coordination between Israelis and Palestinians, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 27 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 22), 2023

Mr. OSSOFF (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. BOOKER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To support the work of the United States Security Coordinator to Israel and the Palestinian Authority in furthering coordination between Israelis and Palestinians, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Middle East Security
5 Coordination Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) Peace, stability, and security in Israel and
2 the West Bank are in the national security interest
3 of the United States.

4 (2) Peace, stability, and security in Israel and
5 the West Bank depend upon effective coordination
6 and deconfliction between the Israel Defense Forces
7 and the Palestinian Authority Security Forces.

8 (3) The professionalism and capacity of Pales-
9 tinian Authority Security Forces is an important
10 factor for safety and stability in Israel and the West
11 Bank and critical to counterterrorism efforts.

12 (4) Examples of security coordination between
13 Israel and the Palestinian Authority include intel-
14 ligence sharing and operational coordination,
15 deconfliction mechanisms and communication during
16 Israel Defense Forces (IDF) activity in the West
17 Bank, joint counterterrorism initiatives and training,
18 facilitation of Palestinian Authority Security Forces
19 movement through Areas B and C, and the Pales-
20 tinian Authority Security Forces safely returning
21 Israelis from Area A to the Israel Defense Forces.

22 (5) Israeli security experts have attested that
23 professionally trained and equipped and effective
24 Palestinian Authority Security Forces would reliably
25 decrease Israel Defense Forces incursions and inter-

1 ventions into Area A and increase stability and secu-
2 rity for Israelis and Palestinians.

3 (6) The core functions of the office of the
4 United States Security Coordinator for Israel and
5 the Palestinian Authority (USSC) are to execute
6 transparent and successful coordination between
7 Israeli security forces and Palestinian Authority Se-
8 curity Forces and to raise the effectiveness of the
9 Palestinian Authority Security Forces.

10 (7) Senior Israeli officials, including former de-
11 fense ministers and IDF chiefs of staff, have cred-
12 ited USSC-championed security coordination with
13 the Palestinian Authority Security Forces as being
14 responsible for eroding the ability of organized terror
15 groups to carry out suicide attacks in Israeli cities
16 and towns.

17 (8) The USSC maintains unique trust and con-
18 fidence from both Israeli and Palestinian Authority
19 security forces, agencies, and senior officials.

20 (9) The multinational coalition that contributes
21 to the mission of the USSC, which includes Bul-
22 garia, Canada, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Po-
23 land, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, dem-
24 onstrates the support of the international community
25 for the mission, assists in sharing the personnel and

1 resource burden, and enables the United States to
2 demonstrate a leading role, which brings legitimacy
3 to the mission and enables coordination to be suc-
4 cessful.

5 **SEC. 3. SENSES OF CONGRESS.**

6 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON SECURITY COORDINA-
7 TION.—It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) security coordination between Israel and the
9 Palestinian Authority—

10 (A) is in the national security interest of
11 the United States;

12 (B) protects Israeli and Palestinian civilian
13 lives and combats acts of terror from groups
14 like Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and
15 Hezbollah;

16 (C) assists in reducing the need for Israeli
17 military interventions in the West Bank;

18 (D) provides greater stability and safety
19 for the Palestinian people in the West Bank;
20 and

21 (E) supports regional peace and stability
22 and improves the prospects for progress to-
23 wards a negotiated resolution of the Israeli-Pal-
24 estinian conflict; and

1 (2) the USSC is a crucial liaison for such effective
2 coordination, professionalization, and communication.
3

4 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON BURDEN SHARING.—
5 It is the sense of Congress that—

6 (1) the financial and personnel burden of the
7 mission of the USSC should be shared by all partners
8 to the mission; and

9 (2) the mission of the USSC should be expanded
10 to include additional nations, and the Department
11 of State, along with the USSC, should
12 make it a priority to actively pursue contributions
13 from additional states.

14 **SEC. 4. REPORTS.**

15 (a) COORDINATION REPORT.—Not later than 90 days
16 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually
17 thereafter for five years, the Secretary of State, in consultation
18 with the USSC, shall submit to the appropriate
19 congressional committees a report that describes the activities
20 of the USSC during the preceding year, including
21 descriptions of the security coordination activities the
22 USSC has undertaken between the Government of Israel
23 and the Palestinian Authority.

1 (b) CLASSIFIED ANNEX.—The reports required by
2 subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form and
3 may include a classified annex.

4 (c) PROFESSIONALIZATION REPORT.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
6 the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually
7 thereafter for five years, the Secretary of State, in
8 consultation with the USSC, shall submit to the ap-
9 propriate congressional committees a report that de-
10 scribes the USSC’s efforts to professionalize Pales-
11 tinian security forces and to build, maintain, and
12 sustain Palestinian security and justice sector insti-
13 tutions.

14 (2) FORM.—The report required under para-
15 graph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but
16 include a classified annex.

17 (d) BURDEN SHARING REPORT.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
19 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
20 of State, in consultation with the USSC, shall sub-
21 mit to the appropriate congressional committees a
22 report that describes the viability of the inclusion of
23 contributions to the mission of the USSC from addi-
24 tional countries, particularly those countries party to

1 the Abraham Accords and other Arab or Muslim-
2 majority countries.

3 (2) FORM.—The report required under para-
4 graph (1) be submitted—

5 (A) in classified form; or

6 (B) in unclassified form and including a
7 classified annex.

8 **SEC. 5. NOTIFICATION.**

9 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
10 gress that—

11 (1) the mission of the USSC is most effective
12 with—

13 (A) a general or flag officer as the head of
14 mission;

15 (B) a head of mission rotation of at least
16 3 years duration; and

17 (C) senior uniformed personnel rotation of
18 at least 2 years duration; and

19 (2) the personnel contributions of other nations
20 to the mission of the USSC are most effective with
21 equivalent rotations.

22 (b) IN GENERAL.—Beginning 180 days after the date
23 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense
24 shall submit written notice and justification to appropriate
25 congressional committees and the Committee on Armed

1 Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Serv-
2 ices of the House of Representatives not later than 120
3 days before the date on which—

4 (1) the head of mission of the USSC is to be
5 replaced with a non-general or flag officer;

6 (2) the head of mission of the USSC is to be
7 rotated out of the head of mission's current assign-
8 ment before 3 consecutive years of service in that
9 position; or

10 (3) any senior uniform personnel rotation of the
11 USSC is to be rotated out of their current assign-
12 ment before 2 consecutive years of service in that
13 position.

14 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-
16 priated \$75,000,000 for each of the first 5 fiscal years
17 beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

18 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts authorized pursuant to
19 subsection (a) shall be available for the United States con-
20 tribution to the mission of the United States Security Co-
21 ordinator for Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

22 (c) RESTRICTION.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds author-
24 ized under subsection (a) may be used to provide le-
25 thal assistance of any kind.

1 (2) EXCEPTION.—The limitation on assistance
2 under paragraph (1) shall not apply to ammunition
3 and other lethal assistance needed for the purposes
4 of training taking place outside of Israel and the
5 West Bank.

6 (d) APPLICATION OF TAYLOR FORCE ACT.—Funds
7 authorized pursuant to subsection (a) shall be made avail-
8 able consistent with section 1004(a) of the Taylor Force
9 Act (22 U.S.C. 2378c-1).

10 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

11 In this Act:

12 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
13 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
14 mittees” means—

15 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations
16 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
17 Senate; and

18 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
19 the Committee on Appropriations of the House
20 of Representatives.

21 (2) SENIOR UNIFORMED PERSONNEL.—The
22 term “senior uniformed personnel” means the senior
23 staff of the USSC, which includes any personnel
24 performing equivalent duties of those with the fol-

1 lowing titles and responsibilities as of the date of the
2 enactment of this Act:

- 3 (A) Chief of Staff.
- 4 (B) Director of Plans.
- 5 (C) Director for Operations.
- 6 (D) Legal Advisor.
- 7 (E) Budget Director.

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