

To the supporters of J Street:

As Israelis dedicated to our country, its future, security and progress, we are pleased to learn of the creation of J Street, a new American movement to support strong U.S. leadership in achieving immediate, peaceful resolution of Israel's conflicts with its neighbors.

Ending the Israeli-Palestinian and the broader Israeli-Arab conflict quickly and diplomatically is an essential national and security interest of the State of Israel – as well as of the United States, the Palestinians and the region as a whole. Only a negotiated, political resolution to these conflicts will ensure Israel's lasting security and viability as a democratic, prosperous home for the Jewish people.

Now more than ever, true friendship requires strong American leadership and engagement to move the sides toward a comprehensive two-state solution. With time running out, business-as-usual will not do.

To achieve these goals, all parties – including the United States – will be called on to demonstrate political will and courage. The emergence of a movement in the United States which understands and is willing to provide political support for difficult compromises is essential to fostering that political will. In our opinion, such a movement is in Israel's best interests.

We deeply value the historic role of the United States as a staunch ally and irreplaceable friend of Israel's. We also value the role the American Jewish community and other American friends have played in strengthening and deepening that bond.

Being a friend and ally – being "pro-Israel" – means caring enough to get involved, express views and concerns, and provide advice. It does not require rigid agreement with every decision ever made or every policy pursued by the government of Israel or of the United States. Debate and discussion are essential to democracy and should be part of the relationship between Israel and Jewish people elsewhere in the world.

The ideas that J Street is promoting (a viable two-state solution, regional peace based on withdrawal to recognized borders with strict security arrangements, and normal relations between Israel and the broader Arab world along the lines of the Arab-Saudi Peace Initiative) have become consensus positions among Israelis. Yet, within that consensus, there is always vigorous and open discussion in Israel over how best to promote our security and interests. Our country is stronger for the robustness of this debate.

There is every reason to believe that a similarly open discussion in the United States will also be in Israel's best interests. We see in the creation of J Street, an expression of support for and commitment to the State of Israel and to a strong and enduring U.S.- Israel relationship. Hopefully, your efforts will help us achieve our country's greatest hope: peace with our neighbors and permanent, recognized and secure borders through a diplomatic end to the conflicts that have plagued our people and inflamed the region for far too long.