# Democrats Scorch Obama Over UN Vote Condemning Israeli Settlements

# December 23, 2016

# By Jeremy Berke

# Business Insider

# <http://www.aol.com/article/2016/12/23/democrats-scorch-obama-over-un-vote-condemning-israeli-settlemen/21641282/>

Congressional Democrats issued scathing statements aimed at the Obama administration over the US's abstention from a Friday UN Security Council vote [demanding Israel stop building settlements](http://www.businessinsider.com/un-resolution-israel-settlements-us-obama-trump-2016-12?utm_source=referral&utm_medium=aol) in occupied Palestinian territory.

Leading Democrats from both houses called out the UN as an inappropriate venue for rejuvenating the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians. They objected to the Obama administration's departure from what they view as decades of established US policy of vetoing UN resolutions regarding Israeli settlements.

Incoming Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York said it was "extremely frustrating, disappointing and confounding" that the Obama administration failed to veto the UN's vote.

Schumer called out the UN as a "fervently" anti-Israel body, since the days of "Zionism is racism."

"Whatever one's views are on settlements, the UN is the wrong forum to settle these issues," Schumer said.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, a Democrat from Connecticut, called the US's abstention from the vote "unconscionable."

"A two-state solution must be negotiated directly between the Israelis and Palestinians, and this resolution flies in the face of this necessity," Blumenthal said.

He also said support for Israel must remain "bipartisan," and that he'll work with colleagues on "both sides of the aisle" to advance "productive measures" that strengthen the US's relationship with Israel.

# Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina, said that he would work to [form a bipartisan coalition](http://www.businessinsider.com/un-resolution-israel-settlements-us-obama-trump-2016-12?utm_source=referral&utm_medium=aol) to "suspend or significantly reduce United States assistance to the United Nations."

Sen. Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat, said that he was "deeply disappointed" that the Obama administration allowed such a "one-sided" resolution to pass.

"Actions like this will only take us further from the peace we all want to see," Wyden said.

And Sen. Mark Warner, a Democrat from Virginia said "one-sided resolutions" at the UN are counterproductive to the peace process and "achieving a two-state solution."

"I am dismayed that the administration departed from decades of U.S. policy by not vetoing the UN resolution regarding Israeli settlements," Warner said.

Rep. Eliot L. Engel, a Democrat from New York and the ranking member on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said he was "very disappointed" by the US's "acquiescence to a one-sided, biased resolution at the United Nations Security Council."

"I have always believed that Israel can't get a fair shake at the UN, and that is why Israel has relied on the United States to protect it from the anti-Israel tendencies of some UN Security Council members," Engel said.

Engel further said that the text of the resolution places the "blame" for the stalled peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians "entirely on Israel."