

**EMBASSY OF ISRAEL
COPENHAGEN**



**שגרירות
קופנהגן**

**The Honorable Pia Kjærsgaard
Speaker of Folketinget
Folketinget
1218 Christiansborg**

Copenhagen, 16th of May 2018

Dear Madam Speaker,

I have the honor forwarding this letter to you, from Yuli Yoel Edelstein, Speaker of the Israeli Parliament, Knesset.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Benny Dagan', written over a horizontal line.

Benny Dagan

Ambassador



בס"ד

יושב-ראש הכנסת

Speaker of the Knesset

Jerusalem, 9 May 2018
24 Iyar 5778

The Honorable Pia Kjaersgaard
Speaker of the Folketinget
Christiansborg
Copenhagen
Denmark

Dear Colleague,

I write you in the wake of statements by Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas on 30 April 2018 to the Palestinian National Council, which are of great concern to me and should also disturb the international community. Mr. Abbas claimed that the Jewish People have no intrinsic connection to the Land of Israel and that they have been persecuted throughout history-including during the Holocaust- "... not because of their religion but because of the loans and banks." His ludicrous suggestion that no events against Jews have taken place in Arab lands in the past six centuries ignores anti-Jewish attacks throughout the Arab world (for example in Fez, Aleppo, Damascus, Baghdad, and Cairo) which culminated in the virtual expulsion of Jews from the entire region in the twentieth century. Though Mr. Abbas released an apology last Friday, that cannot be accepted as an expression of sincere regret, and his original statements must be seen for what they are: a gross distortion of Jewish history and the Holocaust in particular, which reek of the worst tropes of classical antisemitism and delegitimize the State of Israel.

Coming from a leader who claims to be committed to peace with Israel, these statements are not only despicable but also troubling and irresponsible. Unfortunately, this is not the first time Mr. Abbas has delegitimized the State of Israel and perverted Jewish history to suit his aims. I am concerned that this ethos, which has once again been given official approval from Ramallah, has spurred a malicious discourse regarding Israel fed by distortions and disinformation. I wonder, therefore, whether Mr. Abbas can continue to play an effective role in the efforts to forge a lasting peace in the Middle East.

I know that you and members of your parliament have expressed a desire to play a constructive role in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for which my colleagues and I are grateful. It is precisely for these reasons that I hope you share my view as to the serious nature of the aforementioned statements. I urge you to denounce Mr. Abbas's statements in no uncertain terms and take the steps necessary to ensure that you help eliminate antisemitism and Holocaust denial, which are so antithetical to the laws and norms of the international community. I hope that, working together, we can put an end to this most ancient hatred and build a peaceful future for Israel and all its neighbors.

Sincerely,

MK Yuli Yoel Edelstein
Speaker of the Knesset