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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

August 21, 2006

The Honorable Mahmoud Abbas
President
Palestinian National Authority

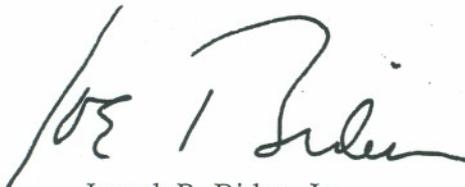
Dear Mr. President:

This is to express grave concern about the well-being of two Fox News employees, Steve Centanni and Olaf Wiig, kidnapped a week ago in Gaza. We appreciate your efforts to solve this situation peacefully but a week has now passed and there has been no word on the case. We understand that no group has yet come forward to claim responsibility or make demands.

The role of the foreign press in Gaza is instrumental in providing information independent from governments both on the situation in Gaza and on fast-breaking developments there. In order to allow reporters and staff to take serious risks in troubled areas of the world, foreign news establishments must be assured that governments will do everything necessary to ensure that they can operate freely, without harassment or threat of violence.

We urge you to redouble your efforts to peacefully resolve this situation, securing the release of the two hostages unharmed, and bringing to justice those responsible for this unprovoked act.

Sincerely,



Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Ranking Member



Richard G. Lugar
Chairman