Renews commitment to a strong state of Israel

WASHINGTON – During a trip to Poland last week, U.S. Representative Mike Quigley (D-IL) visited the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum in Poland, where he laid a wreath in front of the execution wall. The visit, which occurred on January 12, comes two weeks ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27.

“The overwhelming feelings of sadness and loss that permeate Auschwitz-Birkenau are as clear and humbling to me today as they were on my first visit here nearly two years ago,” said Rep. Quigley. “We can never forget what happened here, and the memory does not dissipate with time, not for me, and certainly not for the hundreds of thousands who suffered and lost loved ones behind these walls. It is a solemn reminder of the history Jewish people carry each day and why our commitment to the state of Israel is so important”

PHOTO*: Rep. Quigley (right) and Sen. Kirk (left) lay a wreath at the Wall of Death at Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial.*

PHOTO*: Rep. Quigley meets with Piotr Cywiński, the director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum.*

In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly designated January 27, the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp, as International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD) to honor the victims of the Nazi era. The U.N. resolution that created IHRD rejects denial of the Holocaust and condemns discrimination and violence based on religion or

ethnicity.

Rep. Quigley's first visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum came when he traveled to Poland in 2010. Later that year, the Congressman helped lead efforts to preserve the Holocaust site through $15 million in grant funding from the U.S. State Department, which will distribute the funding over a five-year period beginning this year.

Rep. Quigley has been a stalwart supporter of Israel. In 2011, he spoke out against the unilateral Palestinian bid for statehood and called for direct two-party talks with Israel. He has repeatedly called for increased sanctions against Iran, specifically urging sanctions again the Central Bank of Iran. In addition, he spoke from the floor in commemoration Israel's 62nd birthday last year and urged Secretary Clinton to oppose U.N. action against Israeli settlements.

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