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Mossawa Center calls for international action: Lieberman's appointment is a threat to human rights in Israel

Haifa, Israel, October 24, 2006 – The Mossawa Center, the Advocacy Center for the Arab Citizens of Israel, calls upon the international community to act against Prime Minister Olmert's coalition agreement with Yesrael Beitino and Avigdor Lieberman's appointment as minister for strategic threats, deputy prime minister and member of the security cabinet. Lieberman's racist propaganda and platform to transfer the Arab community of Israel are blatant violations of human rights, contradicting not only the international agreements signed by Israel, but the democratic values of the state as well. With such influential political positions, Lieberman would have a frightening amount of power to make his outright racist position a reality at the price of the human rights of the Arab minority in Israel.

In 2004, Lieberman was quoted as saying, "Arabs of Israel' should be expelled." In a Parliament Plenum debate on May 4, 2006, MK Lieberman stated that he hoped that Arab MKs "would be executed." Such incitement has led to the build up of racist tension towards the Arab minority, resulting in numerous injuries, attacks on Arab citizens and the killing of 34 Arab citizens in the past six years. Lieberman has also stood against the international consensus of withdrawal from the Occupied Territories: "For 30 years, the right has been in power, but despite this, we haven't succeeded in preventing the withdrawals that have taken place. Perhaps we need to change the strategy, because it is incorrect." During the 2006 Knesset elections, Lieberman's incitement did not stop, and he was able to encourage voters to vote for his party and their racist viewpoints, resulting in 11 seats for the Yesrael Beitino, giving them the power to negotiate a deal with the governmental coalition.

As the Knesset stands ready to vote on Yesrael Beitino's coalition agreement, and MK Lieberman readies himself to become the minister for strategic threats, as well as deputy

prime minister and member of the security cabinet, we call upon the international community to act immediately and contact the office of the Prime Minister Ehud Olmert (pm_eng@pmo.gov.il) and their respective embassies in Israel and to voice their concerns for the status of human rights in Israel and prevent the impending appointment of Lieberman and a governmental coalition with Yesrael Betino.

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