

Statement of Sen. Sam Brownback
Middle East Violence
April 1, 2002

It is with a broken heart that I have watched the violence in the Middle East explode. First and foremost, I extend my condolences to the victims of the violence between Israelis and Palestinians, and in particular to those innocent civilians caught in the nightmare of daily terror attacks.

In any conflict, blame can be apportioned to both sides. However, there is no parity between a military response to military targets and wanton attacks on civilian men, women and children by terrorists bent on inflicting death and destruction.

I continue to believe there can be a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. That solution will not come from capitulation to terror, nor will it come from intervention. It is not the role of the President of the United States to force responsible behavior onto the parties to this conflict. The Palestinian people sought a leader who could speak for them; it is up to them to ensure that their representative brings them into the orbit of civilized nations.

Terrorism is not a tool of the civilized. The only solution lies in leadership: Only when Yasser Arafat repudiates terrorism as a negotiating tool can the government of Israel begin to discuss a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem.