

Congressman Joel Hefley

July 11, 2008

John Connolly,
Executive Director
Institute For Public Dialogue

Dear Mr. Connolly:

I am intrigued with what I've read about your "Public Talks" concept. Having served on the Armed Services committee and also chaired the House delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, I know how frustrating it can be to have the normal diplomatic process break down with no place else to go. As I understand it, the "Public Talks" process would be used only after everything else had failed.

I have no way of knowing if this concept is workable, but I feel strongly that it should at least be fully explored. I would, therefore, encourage the Senate Foreign Relations committee and the House Foreign Affairs committee to hold hearings to investigate the viability of "Public Talks". We might just find that this is an important new negotiating option when all else has failed.

Thanks for sharing the concept of "Public Talks" with me and I look forward to following future developments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel Hefley" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joel Hefley (U.S. Congress, Ret.)