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## **Wexler Travels to France to Urge European Union to Add Hezbollah To its Terrorist List**

*Chairman of Europe Subcommittee to Meet with New French Foreign Minister Kouchner*

(Washington, DC) Congressman Robert Wexler (D-FL), a senior member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe, will travel to France next week and meet with leading French officials, including Foreign Minister Kouchner and members of the French National Assembly. Wexler also plans to meet with the leaders of the Jewish and Muslim communities in Paris.

The purpose of Congressman Wexler's visit will be to strengthen US-French bilateral relations following the recent election of President Nicholas Sarkozy. Congressman Wexler will also focus on US-French and US-EU cooperation in the Middle East specifically as it relates to Israel, Lebanon, and the Gaza Strip and the terrorist organizations Hezbollah and Hamas. Last week, Wexler held a hearing in the Subcommittee on Europe that brought needed attention to the threat posed by Hezbollah to France, the EU and international community. Congressman Wexler's hearing shed light on Hezbollah's vast network in Europe and how its omission from the EU list of terrorist groups has strengthened its operational capabilities in the Middle East and globally. At the hearing Wexler called on President Sarkozy and EU governments to add Hezbollah to the EU's terrorist list.

During the visit Wexler will also focus on defense, security and non-proliferation cooperation as it relates to thwarting Iran's nuclear weapons program, securing Afghanistan and bringing the Balkans fully into the transatlantic community. Additional topics of discussion will include the growing French role in Darfur and Chad, Turkey's European Union's (EU) accession and constitutional process, Ballistic Missile Defense cooperation, and Russia.

"America, France and Europe face difficult foreign policy challenges from Afghanistan to Lebanon and from Iran to Sudan. I look forward to deepening the US-Franco partnership and transatlantic relations, both of which are central to global security and stability," Congressman Wexler said. "I believe America has an important new partner in President Sarkozy, and I look forward to working with his government to address common threats to the United States, France, Europe and Israel."

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*Congressman Wexler is Chairman of the Europe Subcommittee and a senior member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the House Judiciary Committee; and he also sits on the Financial Services Committee.*