**Cruz, Graham Join Forces to Defund United Nations**

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By: Sandy Fitzgerald

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http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/Ted-Cruz-Lindsey-Graham-Defund-UN/2017/01/12/id/768206/

Sens. Ted Cruz and Lindsey Graham were fierce rivals last year for the presidential nomination, but said Thursday they're now joining forces to achieve one common goal — defunding the United Nations unless it rescinds its [**Security Council's vote against**](http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/us-israel-settlement-vote/2016/12/23/id/765409/) allowing Israeli West Bank settlements.

"What brings us together today is an issue that I think really unites Republicans but also unites Americans, and that's standing with Israel," Cruz told [**Fox News' "Fox and Friends" program.**](http://video.foxnews.com/v/5279443300001/?playlist_id=930909787001#sp=show-clips) "If you look in the last month what [President] Barack Obama has done, I think it's been nothing short of shameful. It has been striking out against Israel, really showing his true beliefs."

Cruz said he and Graham will file their legislation to defund the U.N. on Thursday, and hope to "end it all unless and until they reverse this anti-Israel resolution."

Also appearing on[**MSNBC's "Morning Joe" program,**](http://www.msnbc.com/morning-joe/watch/ted-cruz-putin-a-thug-and-we-must-stand-up-to-him-853296707792) Graham noted that 22 percent of the money for the United Nations comes from the American taxpayers, and he does not think "It's a good investment for an American taxpayer to give money to an organization that condemns the only democracy in the Mideast, takes the settlement issue and says that's the most important and only issue in term of impediments to peace."

The United States abstained from the vote, he pointed out, which amounted to Secretary of State John Kerry and Obama "taking a slap at Israel," he said.

"We're going to push back," Graham told the program. "I think most Americans believe that the United Nations has become more anti-Semitic and we're going to stop the money until we get this fixed. I appreciate Ted's leadership on this."

Cruz told the program that he believes Obama's actions toward Israel have been "shameful" and he's "done real damage," a the resolution declared much of Israel "illegal and illegitimate."

"They say Jerusalem is not part of Israel," said Cruz. "It declares the Jewish quarter is not part of Israel. It says the Temple Mount, the holiest site for people in Jerusalem is not part of Israel, and the Western Wall. We all remember the image of Barack Obama wearing a yarmulke, standing in front of the Western Wall. He now signed on to the proposition that is illegal occupied territory. That is shameful in my view."

Cruz said he and Graham and others can give speeches and pass their own resolution, but cutting off U.N. funds "is the only way to get their attention."

The once-battling senators appeared to have come to some peace in their own regard, even laughing on the "Morning Joe" program about [**Graham's campaign comments**](http://www.newsmax.com/Headline/Lindsey-Graham-Cruz-Disliked-GOP/2016/02/26/id/716275/)that the Senate would not convict someone for killing Cruz on the Senate floor.

The pair also discussed a negative report linking President-elect Donald Trump with Russia during their Fox News appearance, while criticizing news organizations that went ahead with the unsubstantiated document.

"The media still doesn't get why he won, and he [Trump] has got to realize he's president," said Graham of a contentious exchange between Trump and CNN's Jim Acosta during a press conference Wednesday. "The campaign's over. Better days are ahead is what I predict."

"It is not complicated that the media, most of the media is biased," said Cruz. "They've got a political agenda, you know,"

He noted that he and Graham were involved in confirmation hearings for Attorney General-nominee Jeff Sessions, and said the media was more interested in covering "left wing protesters" than they were in airing testimony about Sessions' putting a Klansman on death row for murdering a young African-American man, and "how he helped bankrupt the Klan in Alabama."

Graham and Cruz also discussed confirmation hearings for Secretary of State-nominee Rex Tillerson, with Graham praising yet another former presidential candidate, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., for his line of questioning.

"Mr. Tillerson is very accomplished guy, but when it comes to Russia, I want more clarity," Graham told MSNBC's "Morning Joe" program. "I think war crimes were committed under Putin's control and regime. And, you know, we'll if he can clean up his answers. But it's not about his qualifications as much as it is about how he views Russia and we'll see what happens."

Cruz, who introduced Tillerson during the hearing, described him Thursday as an "incredible businessman" who will be a serious leader to clean up the "mess after eight years of Obama."

"Right now our friends don't trust us and our enemies don't fear us. We have to change. That I hope and believe we're going," said Cruz.

He also defended Tillerson for not condemning Russian President Vladimir Putin, saying he would not want to start a job by "calling one of the leaders of the world a war criminal."

"At the end of the day, Trump is the guy, not Tillerson," said Cruz. "I think Tillerson is a very qualified guy, but I want to see more strength and clarity when it comes to Russia."

Cruz said he does agree, though, that Putin "is a KGB thug" whose pattern has been to use brute force to hold onto power.

"I think much of his aggressiveness has been caused by Obama's weakness," said Cruz. "I'm very encouraged that that's going to change and change significantly on January 20."