

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES.

Recognizing the right of Israel to defend itself against attacks from Gaza and reaffirming the United States' strong support for Israel in its battle with Hamas, and supporting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. McCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the right of Israel to defend itself against attacks from Gaza and reaffirming the United States' strong support for Israel in its battle with Hamas, and supporting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Whereas Hamas was founded with the stated goal of destroying the State of Israel;

Whereas Hamas has been designated by the Secretary of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization;

Whereas Hamas has refused to comply with the requirements of the Quartet (the United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations) that Hamas recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence, and agree to accept previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinians;

Whereas, in June 2006, Hamas crossed into Israel, attacked Israeli forces and kidnapped Corporal Gilad Shalit, whom they continue to hold today;

Whereas Hamas has launched thousands of rockets and mortars since Israel dismantled settlements and withdrew from Gaza in 2005;

Whereas Hamas has increased the range of its rockets, reportedly with support from Iran and others, putting additional large numbers of Israelis in danger of rocket attacks from Gaza;

Whereas Hamas locates elements of its terrorist infrastructure in civilian population centers, thus using innocent civilians as human shields;

Whereas Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in a statement on December 27, 2008, that “[w]e strongly condemn the repeated rocket and mortar attacks against Israel and hold Hamas responsible for breaking the ceasefire and for the renewal of violence there”;

Whereas, on December 27, 2008, Prime Minister of Israel Ehud Olmert said, “For approximately seven years, hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens in the south have been suffering from missiles being fired at them. . . . In such a situation we had no alternative but to respond. We do not rejoice in battle but neither will we be deterred from it. . . .The operation in the Gaza Strip is designed, first and foremost, to bring about an improvement in the security reality for the residents of the south of the country.”;

Whereas, on January 2, 2009, Secretary of State Rice stated that “Hamas has held the people of Gaza hostage ever since their illegal coup against the forces of President

Mahmoud Abbas, the legitimate President of the Palestinian people. Hamas has used Gaza as a launching pad for rockets against Israeli cities and has contributed deeply to a very bad daily life for the Palestinian people in Gaza, and to a humanitarian situation that we have all been trying to address”;

Whereas the humanitarian situation in Gaza, including shortages of food, water, electricity, and adequate medical care, is becoming more acute;

Whereas Israel has facilitated humanitarian aid to Gaza with over 500 trucks and numerous ambulances entering the Gaza Strip since December 26, 2008;

Whereas, on January 2, 2009, Secretary of State Rice stated that it was “Hamas that rejected the Egyptian and Arab calls for an extension of the tahadiya that Egypt had negotiated” and that the United States was “working toward a cease-fire that would not allow a reestablishment of the status quo ante where Hamas can continue to launch rockets out of Gaza. It is obvious that that cease-fire should take place as soon as possible, but we need a cease-fire that is durable and sustainable”; and

Whereas the ultimate goal of the United States is a sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that will allow for a viable and independent Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel, which will not be possible as long as Israeli civilians are under threat from within Gaza: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) expresses vigorous support and unwavering

3 commitment to the welfare, security, and survival of

1 the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state
2 with secure borders, and recognizes its right to act
3 in self-defense to protect its citizens against acts of
4 terrorism;

5 (2) reiterates that Hamas must end the rocket
6 and mortar attacks against Israel, recognize Israel's
7 right to exist, renounce violence, and agree to accept
8 previous agreements between Israel and the Pal-
9 estinians;

10 (3) encourages the President to work actively to
11 support a durable, enforceable, and sustainable
12 cease-fire in Gaza, as soon as possible, that prevents
13 Hamas from retaining or rebuilding the capability to
14 launch rockets and mortars against Israel and allows
15 for the long term improvement of daily living condi-
16 tions for the ordinary people of Gaza;

17 (4) believes strongly that the lives of innocent
18 civilians must be protected and all appropriate meas-
19 ures should be taken to diminish civilian casualties
20 and that all involved should continue to work to ad-
21 dress humanitarian needs in Gaza;

22 (5) supports and encourages efforts to diminish
23 the appeal and influence of extremists in the Pales-
24 tinian territories and to strengthen moderate Pal-

1 estinians who are committed to a secure and lasting
2 peace with Israel; and

3 (6) reiterates its strong support for United
4 States Government efforts to promote a just resolu-
5 tion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a seri-
6 ous and sustained peace process that leads to the
7 creation of a viable and independent Palestinian
8 state living in peace alongside a secure State of
9 Israel.