



Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE

February 6, 2024

SPONSORED BY

Kit Collins, Council Vice President

AGENDA ITEM

24-035 - Resolution in Support of a Ceasefire in Israel and Gaza

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Whereas, the Medford City Council recognizes and affirms the sanctity, preciousness, and equality of all human life;

Whereas, on October 7th, 2023, the terrorist group Hamas killed over 1,200 Israeli residents, took over 240 hostages, committed horrific atrocities, displaced families, and wreaked untold grief and trauma upon the civilian population of Israel;

Whereas, since October 7th, Hamas is estimated to have fired more than 12,000 rockets into Israel, killing 15 civilians and injuring over 700;

Whereas, since those horrific attacks, the ongoing military campaign and blockade has created a humanitarian crisis of catastrophic proportions in Gaza;

Whereas, since October 7th, the Israeli Defense Forces have killed over 26,000 Palestinians in Gaza, injured over 62,000, and more than 85% of all residents have been displaced;

Whereas, the ongoing military campaign has had a massive toll on civilians in Gaza, with UNICEF describing the Gaza Strip as the “world’s most dangerous place to be a child,” and reporting that 40% of all deaths in Gaza have been deaths of children;

Whereas, Gaza has been hit by more than 22,000 airstrikes, resulting in the destruction of over 70% of all homes and schools, and most of its civilian infrastructure, including electricity, communications, water, sewer and sanitation systems, with the World Health Organization reporting that all Gazan hospitals have been destroyed or seriously damaged, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis;

Whereas, the near-total siege on Gaza has prevented the delivery of lifesaving humanitarian aid;

Whereas, the World Food Program has reported that all 2.2 million people in Gaza are facing crisis

levels of food insecurity; that one in four Gazans is facing catastrophic hunger; and that without an end to bombardment and resumption of humanitarian aid, famine will spread quickly across the population;

Whereas, humanitarian organizations report that on average, 250 Palestinians die each day from hunger, disease, exposure and airstrikes, a scale of death exceeding any other recent armed conflict;

Whereas, Hamas continues to hold Israeli civilians hostage, which is a war crime;

Whereas, Israel continues to detain Palestinians who have never been charged with or convicted of a crime, including scores of children;

Whereas, on October 26, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for an “immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce” between Israeli forces and Hamas militants in Gaza, and numerous international humanitarian organizations have similarly called for a sustained ceasefire;

Whereas, the previous ceasefire from November 24 to November 30, 2023 allowed for the release of hostages and allowed emergency aid and fuel to enter Gaza;

Whereas, many members of the Medford community are suffering from trauma, grief, shock and fear, compounded by increased incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Palestinian racism, both nationally and locally;

Whereas, members of the Medford community, including Palestinians and Jews, are speaking out for peace in Israel and Palestine and in support of a permanent, bilateral ceasefire and a return of all hostages;

Now, therefore, be it resolved:

That the Medford City Council unequivocally condemns the terrorist attacks by Hamas on October 7th, 2023, and all subsequent attacks, by all parties, on civilians;

That the Medford City Council supports an enduring, bilateral ceasefire in Israel and Gaza and the immediate return of all hostages;

That the the Medford City Council supports the lifting of the blockade and the uninhibited provision of life-saving humanitarian aid to Gaza;

That the Medford City Council affirms the inalienable right of all people to live in peace, free from fear of harm and prejudice;

That the Medford City Council unequivocally condemns all xenophobic violence, attacks and rhetoric, and affirms the inalienable right of all people to know safety and acceptance regardless of their religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, or skin color;

That the Medford City Council urges the Biden Administration, Senate, and Congress to exert the full extent of their power, influence and funding to bring about an enduring ceasefire, the uninhibited provision of humanitarian aid, and the release of all hostages and detained innocents;

That a copy of this resolution be sent to each member of Medford's federal delegation and to President Biden as an urging to use their power and influence to bring about a sustained and enduring ceasefire so as to protect and honor all human life.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None