Resolution 272-2023

Denouncing the Terrorist Group Hamas and Supporting the State of Israel

WHEREAS, on Saturday, October 7, 2023, while Jews around the world were celebrating Shabbat and the joyous holiday of Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, the terrorist group Hamas, staged a surprise attack on Israel by air, land, and sea; and

WHEREAS, more than 20 communities within the internationally recognized sovereign territory of the State of Israel were systematically attacked; and

WHEREAS, more than 1,400 Jews have been slaughtered, simply because they are Jewish., with those killed including men, women, children, infants, the elderly including Holocaust survivors; and

WHEREAS, more than 200 civilians, including American citizens, have been kidnapped and taken into Gaza; and

WHEREAS, Hamas is a terrorist organization, not freedom fighters, not militants, but terrorists as designated by the United States State Department, and the European Union; and

WHEREAS, words matter.

WHEREAS, the United States and the State of Israel have been allies and partners in their shared values of peace and justice since the United States was the first to recognize Israel as an independent state in 1948; and

WHEREAS, Article 7 of the Hamas Charter calls for the elimination of the State of Israel and extermination of Jews worldwide; and

WHEREAS, President Joseph Biden issued a joint statement along with the leaders of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom stating, “We make clear that the terrorist actions of Hamas have no justification, no legitimacy, and must be universally condemned. There is never any justification for terrorism. In recent days, the world has watched in horror as Hamas terrorists massacred families in their homes, slaughtered over 200 young people enjoying a music festival, and kidnapped elderly women, children, and entire families, who are now being held as hostages”; and

WHEREAS, it was little more than 80 years ago that 6,000,000 Jews were systematically executed and burned in ovens by the Nazis during The Holocaust, because they were Jewish; and

WHEREAS, the last time this number of Jews were murdered in a single day was by the Nazis during The Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2023 two members of the Township Council of the Township of Teaneck were in Jerusalem with their families celebrating the Jewish holidays, when they, their spouses and children were forced to run to shelters repeatedly for their safety as terrorists launched a barrage of thousands of rockets into Israel; and

WHEREAS, an ambulance donated to Magen David Adom by a member of this Council was attacked by Hamas and its 22-year-old driver was murdered while driving in a properly marked emergency vehicle in an effort to render emergency medical assistance to some of the thousands of wounded Israeli civilians; and,

WHEREAS, thousands of Teaneck residents are currently studying abroad in Israel, living abroad in Israel, or have been called up from Teaneck to defend Israel from terror; and

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2023, the Township Manager sent a statement to residents describing “an unconscionable appalling attack on Israel by Hamas who coordinated a massive, coordinated land, air and sea assault killing hundreds of Israelis and injuring a thousand more.” and stating that “There is never any justification for terrorism.”; and

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2023, Hamas called for an International Day of Rage against Jews worldwide, and law enforcement at all levels have worked to ensure that all residents were safe and all residents and houses of worship continue to be safe; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Teaneck is a diverse community, with a Jewish population of about 40%, which includes those who are unaffiliated, reform, conservative and orthodox; and

WHEREAS, at least 29 Americans have been murdered; and

WHEREAS, Israel, along with all sovereign nations, has a right to defend itself from attack; and

WHEREAS, the State of Israel has responded to the attacks with a declaration of war against Hamas;

WHEREAS, the terrorist acts of Hamas will result in tremendous loss of life on both sides, and innocent civilian loss should be spared; and

WHEREAS, as Americans we must stand united in firmly condemning any person or group which espouses such antisemitism, racism, hatred, bigotry and violence and acknowledge and declare to ourselves and to the world that those who espouse such doctrines are evil and pose a threat to all of humanity; and

WHEREAS, the collective life experiences of Jews show that each time Israel is forced to defend herself, it is universally followed by an increase in antisemitic attacks worldwide, with Jews being attacked simply for being Jewish, including in Teaneck; and

WHEREAS, the Anti-Defamation League has stated that since October 7, 2023 antisemitic attacks have increased 488% worldwide.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Teaneck that the Township of Teaneck stands united with Israel, the Jewish Community, and all those affected by these acts of terror; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township stands in solidarity with the people of Israel and extend our condolences for the all lives lost in these attacks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council supports Israel’s right to defend herself against terrorism; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council commends Township Manager Dean Kazinci for his statement sent to residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council prays for the safe return of all hostages taken by Hamas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council thanks law enforcement at all levels for continuing to keep all residents safe; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council denounces the views espoused by Hamas and their supporters as contrary to the very principles and ideals that we as a nation hold dear; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we pray for their safe return to Teaneck for all Teaneck residents currently in Israel and for the safety of all former Teaneck residents in Israel who have been and will continue to be impacted by events; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township of Teaneck supports the Teaneck Jewish Community and will work to ensure their continued safety; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we look forward to a peaceful resolution ensuring the security and safety of all those residing in Israel and Gaza and the West Bank.