

H. Res. 951

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

March 5, 2008.

Whereas more than 4,000 rockets and mortar shells have been fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip by Hamas and other terrorist organizations since Israeli forces withdrew from there in 2005;

Whereas, since January 1, 2008, terrorists have fired nearly a thousand rockets and mortar shells into Israel;

Whereas the near-daily rocket fire has been targeted primarily and intentionally at civilian communities in Israel, such as Sderot and Ashkelon, making life in such areas agonizing;

Whereas the terrorist rockets have hit homes, schools, buildings, roads, power lines, and other such infrastructure in Israel;

Whereas these unprovoked rocket and mortar attacks have murdered over a dozen Israelis, inflicted hundreds of casualties, produced thousands of cases of shock and post-traumatic stress, especially among children, and caused severe disruption of daily life;

Whereas these deliberate cross-border rocket and mortar attacks on civilian populations constitute a blatant violation of human rights and international law;

Whereas those responsible for launching rocket attacks against Israel routinely embed their production facilities and launch sites amongst the Palestinian civilian population, utilizing them as human shields;

Whereas intentionally targeting civilian populations and the use of human shields violates international humanitarian and human rights law;

Whereas numerous reports have cited the copious amounts of sophisticated weapons, small arms, and weapons manufacturing materials that have been smuggled into Gaza through Egypt;

Whereas public reports have cited the role of Iran and Syria in providing material support and training to those carrying out rocket and other terrorist attacks from Gaza;

Whereas public reports have referenced the increased flow of ammunition, explosives, and higher-grade weapons into the Gaza Strip as a result of Hamas' breach of the 12-kilometer security fence separating Gaza from Egyptian Sinai on January 23, 2008;

Whereas it was reported that after the breach of the Egyptian-Gaza border, many Palestinian terrorists who had trained in Syria and Iran returned to Gaza;

Whereas the fielding and use of longer-range rockets by Hamas and other terrorist organizations to reach larger Israeli cities represents a dangerous expansion of the organizations' offensive capabilities and an escalation of the terrorist attacks on Israel;

Whereas the Government of Israel's military operations in Gaza only target Hamas and other terrorist organizations;

Whereas the inadvertent inflicting of civilian casualties as a result of defensive military operations aimed at military targets, while deeply regrettable, is not at all morally equivalent to the deliberate targeting of civilian populations as practiced by Hamas and other Gaza-based terrorist groups; and

Whereas the situation in the Gaza Strip remains a threat to international security and regional stability: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) strongly condemns—

(A) Hamas, which controls Gaza, and other Palestinian terrorist organizations for the ongoing rocket attacks on Israeli civilians and continued human rights violations;

(B) state sponsors of terror, such as Iran and Syria, for enabling Palestinian terrorist organizations to carry out attacks against innocent Israeli civilians; and

(C) the use of innocent Palestinian civilians as human shields by those who carry out rocket and other attacks;

(2) expresses condolences to the families of the innocent victims on both sides of the conflict;

(3) supports the sovereign right of the Government of Israel to defend its territory against attacks;

(4) expresses sympathy and support for innocent Palestinian civilians who reject all forms of terrorism and desire to live in peace with their Israeli neighbors but who continue to be utilized as human shields by terrorist organizations;

(5) considers rocket attacks against Israel and the fostering of terrorism in the Palestinian territories as direct and serious impediments to the achievement of Israeli-Palestinian peace;

(6) calls on the President to—

(A) direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to introduce a resolution within the United Nations Security Council condemning Palestinian rocket and other attacks against innocent Israeli civilians; and

(B) direct the Secretary of State to raise this issue in all applicable bilateral and international fora;

(7) calls on responsible countries and United States allies in the Middle East to officially and publicly condemn Palestinian rocket attacks and other terrorist actions against Israel; and

(8) reaffirms the strong and unyielding friendship between the Governments and the people of Israel and the United States.

Attest:

Clerk.