

From: [Matthew Garland](mailto:Matthew.Garland@bethisraelmalden.org)
To: [Carol Ann Desiderio](mailto:Carol.Ann.Desiderio@cityofmalden.org)
Subject: Fwd: Vote "NO" on a ceasefire resolution
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 11:12:19 AM
Attachments: [Open Letter to Mayor and City Councillors.pdf](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Matthew Garland** <mgarland@bethisraelmalden.org>
Date: Fri, May 31, 2024 at 1:54 PM
Subject: Vote "NO" on a ceasefire resolution
To: <cdesiderio@cityofmalden.org>

Hi Ms. Desiderio,

I sent this email to the mayor and city councilors last week to voice my opposition to a ceasefire resolution. I'd like it to be counted in the tally of emails for the upcoming council meeting. Thank you!

Have a great weekend,

Matthew Garland

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Matthew Garland** <mgarland@bethisraelmalden.org>
Date: Wed, May 22, 2024 at 4:50 PM
Subject: Open Letter to the Mayor and City Councillors
To: Mayor Christenson <mayor@cityofmalden.org>, <pcrowe@cityofmalden.org>, <pcondon@cityofmalden.org>, <alinehan@cityofmalden.org>, <romalley@cityofmalden.org>, <ataylor@cityofmalden.org>, <swinslow@cityofmalden.org>, <csimonelli@cityofmalden.org>, <jsica@cityofmalden.org>, <cspadafora@cityofmalden.org>, Karen Colón Hayes <kcolonhayes@cityofmalden.org>, <cmcdonald@cityofmalden.org>
Cc: <info@advocateneews.net>

Dear Mayor Christenson and members of the City Council,

It has come to my attention that a resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and return of all the Israeli hostages is being prepared to present to the City Council. While the deaths of all civilians pains me greatly, I must respectfully reject such a notion, and I strongly encourage you to consider the following points.

1. **Security Concerns**

- a. **A ceasefire requires mutual acceptance from both parties. Hamas has a documented history of breaking ceasefires with Israel, starting from when they were elected in 2006 and immediately began attacking Israeli civilians. They broke the ceasefire that was in place up to October 6 with the October 7 Massacre, and their leadership has vowed to repeat these attacks until Israel is destroyed and the Jews are annihilated. Hamas must be eliminated, or at the bare minimum demilitarized, and rendered incapable of attacking Jews ever again. A ceasefire will only give them the opportunity to steal millions more of international aid and build up another arsenal to commit further violence.**

2. International Law and War Crimes

- a. **One of the main bases for the anger against the war in Gaza are the libelous claims that Israel is committing “war crimes” and “genocide”.**
 - i. **The former president of the International Court of Justice, Judge Joan E. Donoghue, who presided over the case brought by South Africa against Israel, clarified that the ICJ’s did not rule that Israel is committing genocide, nor that the claim of genocide is plausible. Rather, the court ruled that the Palestinians had a plausible right to be protected from genocide, and that South Africa had a plausible right to present the claim in court.**
 - ii. **The death toll in Gaza is used to garner sympathy and prove genocide or ethnic cleansing. The problem is the numbers reported by the U.N. are directly from Hamas. Here are some examples to show how Hamas lies about the numbers.**
 - 1. **On 10/28/23, the U.N. reported 7703 total casualties, including 1863 women and 3195 children. On 10/29/23, the**

U.N. reported 8005 total casualties (total increase of 302), including 2062 women (+199) and 3324 children (+129). *In other words, more women and children died on October 29th than the total number of casualties.*

2.

On 10/26/23 the al-Ahli hospital was hit by a rocket, blamed on Israel. The U.N. reported 461 casualties. Weeks later multiple sources concluded not only that Israel wasn't responsible, but the death toll was closer to 65. *The casualty count was never revised.*

3.

On 4/6/24, Hamas acknowledged that it had missing data for 11,371 casualties. The U.N. now notes, as of May, that 24,686 of the claimed 34,844 casualties have been identified.

4.

On 4/6/24, Hamas reported that 0 men, >9,500 women, and >14,500 children were killed. On 4/8/24, they reported that 10,006 men, 4,959 women, and 7,797 children were killed. Also, Hamas counts under 21 to be a child. So many of those "children" are actually adults, and militants. This is important because Israel reports the IDF eliminated upwards of 14,000 terrorists. So out of the 25,000 Hamas confirmed deaths 11,000 were civilians. This means the civilian to combatant casualty ratio is 0.8:1; lower than any other modern conflict. It shows the precision and caution that Israel uses when attacking, even in a densely crowded urban environment.

b.

Conversely, the U.N., New York Times, Human Rights Watch, and other independent third parties confirmed that Hamas stores weapons and conducts military operations from protected sites in Gaza - hospitals, schools, mosques, residential homes. Not only is that a war crime, but under the Geneva Convention it strips the protected sites of their protected status. This is to dissuade militant groups from hiding behind civilians, which they would all do if it meant they could attack with impunity.

All civilian deaths are a tragedy, but the blame lies on the entity that

started the war and uses its civilians as human shields, not the sovereign nation that is working to rescue its hostages and protect its civilians from future violence.

3.

Disproportionate focus on Israel

a.

Why is the only Jewish State singled out? Israel is not the only country at war, or receiving American aid. Why is Israel the only country being asked to stop defending itself?

b.

This is the only global conflict out of a current 110 violent conflicts that receives a daily update from the United Nations, despite the magnitude and severity of other conflicts such as Sudan and Russia/Ukraine.

4.

Scope of Purview

a.

With all due respect, matters of international geopolitics fall well outside the responsibility of a municipal government. It is not the place of *any* City Council to make resolutions on any international conflict. Additionally, there is no precedent to do so. Has this Council entertained a resolution to call for a ceasefire in Ukraine? Azerbaijan? Sudan? Is this Council prepared to entertain resolutions for the other 109 current armed conflicts?

5.

Nature of the Conflict

a.

Some people claim this is about land, or freedom. That is false. Israel pulled the IDF from Gaza in 2005, forcibly evicted the nearly 10,000 Jews who lived there, and gave control to the Palestinian Authority. There has been no occupation since then. There was no security wall, no restrictions of movement. In 2006 Hamas won the elections, forcibly ejected all Palestinian Authority members from Gaza, and immediately attacked Israeli civilians. Hamas is a radical Islamist cult with the extremist belief that all lands that were once under the

Islamic Caliphate eternally belong to Arabs. The English saying “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” comes from the original Arabic saying that translates to “From the water to the water, Palestine will be Arab”. *It is about ethnically cleansing the Jews, not about establishing an independent Palestinian state at peace with Israel as its neighbor.*

6.

Alternative Solution

a.

Israel has stated that its two goals are the release of all hostages and the removal of Hamas’ ability to attack Jews ever again. If Hamas were to release all the hostages and surrender, the war would be over. In Israel’s latest ceasefire offer, they even offered to allow Hamas to remain in power if they demilitarized! Instead of calling for a ceasefire, international efforts should focus on pressuring Hamas to comply. All financial aid to Hamas leaders must stop. *It is imperative for the entire world to show terrorist organizations that the cost of attacking civilians far outweighs the rewards.*

7.

Humanitarian Solution

a.

Israel allows in more humanitarian aid than the UN is capable of distributing. Satellite images show hundreds of trucks backed up inside the border crossing. Additionally, Hamas militants hijack aid trucks and steal it for themselves, and execute civilians who try to take aid for themselves. External regional forces, such as Egypt and Jordan, should be pressured to assist in getting the aid to civilians.

b.

Israel has evacuated nearly 1 million civilians out of Rafah. Social media videos from Palestinians in Gaza show the beaches at Khan Yunis jam packed with refugees. Pressure on Egypt to assist with the remaining 300,000 civilians would help efforts to both prevent Hamas from hiding behind human shields and put civilians in a place where the humanitarian aid can reach them unhindered.

In conclusion, while a ceasefire may seem like an immediate solution, it ignores the

underlying cause and emboldens terrorist organizations around the world. This will assuredly lead to significantly greater conflict and loss of innocent life. We must pursue strategies that satisfy both Israel's need for security and acknowledgement and the Palestinian's need for dignity and self-determination in order to ensure a lasting peace for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Thank you for your time,

Matthew Garland
Executive Director, Congregation Beth Israel

On behalf of Congregation Beth Israel of Malden and the Malden Jewish Alliance

To:
Mayor Gary Christenson
Ward 1 Councillor Peg Crowe
Ward 2 Councillor Paul Condon
Ward 3 Councillor Amanda Linehan
Ward 4 Councillor Ryan O'Malley
Ward 5 Councillor Ari Taylor
Ward 6 Councillor Stephen Winslow
Ward 7 Councillor Chris Simonelli
Ward 8 Councillor Jadeane Sica
Councillor at Large Craig Spadafora
Councillor at Large Karen Colón Hayes
Councillor at Large Carey McDonald

CC:
Malden Advocate

[Matthew Garland](#), Executive Director
[Congregation Beth Israel](#)
[Malden Mikvah](#) | [Move to Malden](#)
781-322-5686 ext. 6

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