

Resolution Calling for Bilateral Ceasefire, Hostage Release, and Humanitarian Aid in Gaza

WHEREAS, all life is precious and any killing of innocent civilians, ~~regardless of their faith or ethnicity,~~ is an atrocity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park has a long history of and commitment to building a welcoming, caring, inclusive, and strong community which celebrates its diversity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park is home to people of diverse nationalities, ethnicities, and faiths for whom the current conflict in the Middle East has a real and personal impact; and

WHEREAS, the terrorist attack on October 7, 2023 by Hamas killed 1,200 Israelis which was the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, ~~since between October 7, 2023 and February 20, 2024,~~ the ensuing Israel-Hamas war ~~has killed~~ claimed tens of thousands of Palestinians lives and wounded thousands more; and

WHEREAS, ~~the Israel-Hamas war has also caused the death and injury of Israeli civilians and other foreign nationals~~ have also been killed or injured; and

WHEREAS, millions of Palestinians, as well as thousands of Israelis, who live in Gaza or near its borders have been displaced from their homes or unable to leave the area due to violence since October 7, 2023; and

WHEREAS, ~~millions~~ hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are at imminent risk of death in Gaza without access to necessities such as food, clean drinking water, shelter, and medical attention; and

WHEREAS, the lives of all the remaining hostages in Gaza are also at imminent risk; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park affirms the importance of the human rights principles of dignity, equity and opportunity, and has a long history and tradition of condemning violence locally and globally, and

WHEREAS, prior City Council resolutions have called for humanitarian assistance, supported displaced people and refugees, and committed to protecting the rights of all people, such as in Resolution 2022-5 supporting Ukrainians, Resolution 2020-1 upholding our commitment to inclusivity, and Resolution 2015-66 welcoming Syrian refugees, and

WHEREAS, the community in the City of Takoma Park across all faith groups and backgrounds supports an end to the continued violence and hopes for a permanent solution where Palestinians and Israelis can live side-by-side in enduring peace, safety, justice and dignity; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, ~~t~~The Takoma Park City Council calls for an immediate humanitarian bilateral ceasefire, release of all hostages, and unrestricted access for humanitarian aid; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council urges our Federal elected officials to support and work for the adoption of policies aimed at achieving the goals in this resolution including creating pathways to bring permanent peace to the region; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council reaffirms its call for humanitarian assistance for all civilians and for all displaced persons and refugees worldwide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The City Council expresses its unwavering support for all Arab, Israeli, Palestinian, Jewish, Muslim, Christian and all other members of the community who are impacted, each of whom has the right to learn, work, worship, gather, advocate, mourn, express themselves, and celebrate freely and without fear of violence or discrimination; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Council reaffirms its commitment to being a welcoming community to all and condemns antisemitic and Islamophobic rhetoric and attacks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon passage of this resolution, a copy be provided to the United States Congressional Delegations from Maryland and the President of the United States, Joseph R. Biden.