

RESOLUTION NO. _____-2024

EXPRESSING the request of the Council of the City of Cincinnati for a humanitarian ceasefire in the Israel/Hamas War so that humanitarian aid can reach Gazans, Israeli hostages can be released, and additional innocent lives can be spared.

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2023, during the Jewish holiday of Shemini Atzeret, Israel was attacked by a massive incursion via land, sea, and air by Hamas militants, where over 1,200 Israelis were killed, and more than 240 Israeli civilians were taken hostage into the Gaza Strip controlled by Hamas; and

WHEREAS, the death toll of Palestinians killed in Gaza as of February 10, 2024 has climbed to 29,092 (seventy percent of whom are women and children), with over 69,000 injured and more than 1.9 million Palestinians displaced; and

WHEREAS, more than 1.5 million Palestinians are in the southern city of Rafah struggling to obtain basic humanitarian aid, including food, fuel, and water; and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution which called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, the protection of civilians, the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, ensuring humanitarian access, and that all parties comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law; and

WHEREAS, a temporary ceasefire between Israel and Hamas took effect from November 24-30, 2023; and

WHEREAS, an initial agreement mediated by the Qatari government stipulated a four-day break in fighting where fifty Israeli hostages that were being held in Gaza and 150 Palestinian prisoners in Israel were to be released and additionally more humanitarian aid would be allowed into Gaza; and

WHEREAS, this ceasefire was extended by an additional two days and resulted in the release of twenty additional Israeli hostages and sixty Palestinians; and

WHEREAS, since December 13, 2023, Israel and the United States have become increasingly isolated amid growing global calls for a ceasefire; and

WHEREAS, the former temporary ceasefire saved lives and returned civilians on both sides of the conflict back to their homes; and

WHEREAS, as of February 15, 2024, at least 68 members of Congress have called for a reduction in violence committed in this conflict by both sides, with House Resolution 786 calling for an immediate de-escalation and cease-fire being introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, as of November 30, 2023, 65 percent of Americans said they would support a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas war, while only sixteen percent of respondents said they opposed a ceasefire; and

WHEREAS, on February 8, 2024, President Biden said, “I’m of the view, as you know, that the conduct of the response in Gaza – in the Gaza Strip – has been over the top”; and

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2024, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said, “Israelis were dehumanized in the most horrific way on October 7. The hostages have been dehumanized every day since, but that cannot be a license to others. The overwhelming majority of people in Gaza had nothing to do with the attacks on October 7, and the families in Gaza whose survival depends on deliveries of aid from Israel are just like our families. They are mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, want to earn a decent living, send their kids to school, have a normal life. That’s who they are, that’s what they want. And we cannot, we must not lose sight of that. We cannot, we must not lose sight of our common humanity”; and

WHEREAS, diplomats have been meeting, including U.S. Representative Greg Landsman (OH-01) who stated on February 16, 2024 that his reason for joining the diplomatic corps was to “advocate with key leaders on getting local loved ones to safety, ending this war, fully tackling the humanitarian crisis, and ensuring that any and all post-conflict work leads to a sustainable peace”; and

WHEREAS, on March 2, 2024, during remarks at the 59th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday, Vice President Kamala Harris stated, “There is a deal on the table. And as we have said, Hamas needs to agree to that deal. Let’s get a ceasefire. Let’s reunite the hostages with their families. And let’s provide immediate relief to the people of Gaza”; and

WHEREAS, Cincinnati has commented on and condemned the ongoing conflict in Ukraine (Resolution No. 27-2022) and the attacks on October 7, 2023 (Resolution No. 69-2023), in addition to adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s working definition of antisemitism (Resolution No. 19-2023); and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Cincinnati recognizes the pain of communities affected as a result of this conflict, including members of our Palestinian Muslim, our Palestinian Christian, our Jewish, and our Arab and non-Arab Muslim and Christian communities, and many others; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Cincinnati calls for a humanitarian ceasefire by both Israel and Hamas to find larger solutions for prolonged peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians so that innocent life may be spared; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio:

Section 1. That this Council hereby expresses its deepest sympathy for the civilian victims and all those affected locally and globally by the horrific violence of the Israel/Hamas War.

Section 2. That this Council affirms its condemnation of the attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, which was perpetrated by Hamas.

Section 3. That this Council reaffirms its support of the Biden administration and all diplomats, foreign and domestic, who are committed to finding peaceful solutions to this conflict.

Section 4. That this Council condemns the many violent and dehumanizing incidents of antisemitism and islamophobia that have taken place against Jews, Palestinians, and Arabs who follow both Christianity and Islam.

Section 5. That this Council affirms Cincinnati's status as a welcoming community for those of the Jewish and Muslim faiths, and all religions, and encourages Cincinnati residents to offer support and condolences to members of these communities.

Section 6. That this Council urgently calls for the return of all Israeli civilian hostages taken on October 7, 2023, during the attack executed by Hamas, the immediate and unconditional release of all Palestinian civilians being illegally held/detained or imprisoned, and an immediate humanitarian ceasefire with the goal of finding a prolonged peace between Palestine and Israel.

Section 7. That this Council urgently calls for the immediate establishment of unrestricted humanitarian aid corridors to the Gaza Strip in order to preserve innocent human life.

Section 8. That this Council is firm in its desire for a just and peaceful solution to the present crisis where international law and human rights of all persons in the region are respected and the safety and security of Palestinians and Israelis is guaranteed; and further, in the long term, this Council envisions a negotiated solution that takes fully into account the aspirations of all parties to live in a free and democratic society.

Section 9. That copies of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of Council and be provided to President Joseph Biden, Secretary Antony Blinken, Ambassador Michael Herzog, Senator JD Vance, Senator Sherrod Brown, and Congressman Greg Landsman.

Passed: _____, 2024

Aftab Pureval, Mayor

Attest: _____
Clerk

Submitted by Councilmember Meeka Owens