

CITY OF OJAI

RESOLUTION NO. 24-__

Resolution of the Ojai City Council

Affirming Ojai's International City of Peace Commitment And Calling for a Permanent Ceasefire and other Measures

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that this Resolution is outside of the City of Ojai's municipal code and direct jurisdiction but sometimes we are called to make statements outside of our normal purview; and

WHEREAS, all human life is precious and Ojai's commitment as an International City of Peace calls on elected officials to promote peace for all people, no matter their faith or ethnicity, in accordance with International Humanitarian Law; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ojai condemns the recent rise of Antisemitic, Islamophobic, racist, and xenophobic attacks in our county and across the nation; and

WHEREAS, "ceasefire" is hereby defined as an agreement for both Israel and Palestinians to cease firing and fighting.

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2023 in a coordinated attack, the militant arm of Hamas and other militant Palestinian groups invaded Israel, killing approximately 1200 people (1) and taking 240 hostages, including infants and children; and

WHEREAS, The Gaza Ministry of Health reports at least 29,410 (2,3) Palestinians living in Gaza have been killed, 70% of whom are women and children (4). The ministry does not distinguish between Palestinian civilians and Hamas combatants in their count.

WHEREAS, thousands more Gazans are missing, with many assumed to be under rubble from ongoing bombing. Over 1.5 million civilians have been displaced from their homes and are without access to electricity, drinking water, and medical care, especially for the thousands who have been wounded. Millions of people are at risk if a permanent ceasefire is not achieved and humanitarian aid is not delivered without delay; and

WHEREAS, Israel, the United States Government, the International Court of Justice and many others have called upon Hamas and others to release the hostages they hold; and

WHEREAS, Israel is called to release political prisoners in a fair exchange of hostages and prisoners; and

WHEREAS, international organizations such as Amnesty International, the World Health Organization, the US Agency for International Development, the vast majority of United Nations countries, the International Rescue Committee, Doctors without Borders, and many others have called for a ceasefire in order to prevent the further loss civilians lives and to ensure international humanitarian law; and

WHEREAS, if a permanent ceasefire is not immediately achieved and humanitarian aid is not delivered without delay, the expected Israeli military action in Rafah is predicted to create a humanitarian crisis of immense proportion, including death, famine, and disease for over one million refugees; and

WHEREAS, the majority of Americans support a ceasefire (5), and want to see the U.S. leverage its diplomatic relationships “to prevent further violence and civilian deaths.” (6); and

WHEREAS, elected officials may use the platform provided by their office to advocate for measures that minimize violence and promote peace; and

WHEREAS, the United States holds immense diplomatic power and responsibility to save both Israeli and Palestinian lives; and

WHEREAS, there is ample evidence that both Hamas fighters and the Israeli Defense Forces have committed atrocities and war crimes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Ojai supports U.S. Congress Resolution H.R.786 and joins over seventy other US cities, including Chicago, Seattle, and Oakland, in calling on our Congress Members to demand: an immediate and permanent ceasefire; Hamas and others release all hostages in Gaza in exchange for an agreed number of political prisoners in Israel; to cease unconditional military aid to Israel; to place a neutral peace-keeping presence for the protection of all innocent civilians; unrestricted entry of humanitarian aid and assistance into Gaza; the restoration of food, water, electricity and medical supplies to Gaza; and respect for the implementation international law in accordance with our desire to achieve peace around the world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to city councils in Ventura and Santa Barbara County, the office of State Senator Monique Limón, Governor of California Gavin Newsom, U.S. Representative Salud Carbajal, U.S. Representative Julia Brownley, U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler, U.S. Senator Alex Padilla, U.S. President Joe Biden, and U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, urging them to take immediate action to use their position and influence to end violence and promote peace.

The City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Resolution and shall cause the same to be published or posted according to law.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 26th day of February 2024 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

CITY OF OJAI, CALIFORNIA

Betsy Stix, Mayor

Date signed

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1. <https://www.barrons.com/news/new-tally-puts-october-7-attack-dead-in-israel-at-1-163-78182279>
 2. <https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2823%2902713-7/fulltext>
 3. <https://abcnews.go.com/International/live-updates/israel-gaza-hamas-war/?id=107334442>
 4. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2024/02/gaza-when-mothers-have-bury-least-7700-children-very-basic-principles-are>
 5. <https://www.ispu.org/ceasefire-poll/>
 6. <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2023/10/19/voters-agree-the-us-should-call-for-a-ceasefire-and-de-escalation-of-violence-in-gaza>